



The Himalayas

NIRVANA

BY

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TO
TWO ELDER BRETHREN
ANNIE BESANT
CHARLES WEBSTER LEADBEATER
BY WHOSE AID
THESE EXPERIENCES WERE POSSIBLE
AND TO THOSE
IN WHOM NIRVANA SHINES REVEALED

FOREWORD

I HAVE been asked by my life-long friend Bishop Arundale to write a few words of introduction to his book. I consider it a very remarkable production—a valiant attempt to describe the indescribable. Few among men still living on earth are they who have experienced Nirvana ; fewer still have made any endeavour to record their impressions. Those of us who have touched that truly tremendous altitude know well that all human words fall short in the effort, that all earthly colours are hopelessly inadequate, to depict its supernal glories ; yet must we try, even though we are foredoomed to failure. That which is given to us we must share with our brethren, so far as may be, for that is the law of the occult life ; in obedience to that law this book is written. I have myself tried to convey in words something of that supercelestial atmosphere, as you may read in *The Masters and the Path*, but I think my brother Bishop has been more successful than I. There is a living fire

in his words True, that which he has seen cannot be portrayed; yet the enthusiasm which he throws into the essay is so infectious that we feel ourselves on the very verge of understanding Much of upliftment, much of help he certainly can and does give us; if we cannot yet know all, at least we are nearer to the knowing, at least we are encouraged by the testimony of one who already knows. And where he stands now, all will stand one day.

So let us unite in outpouring our heartfelt gratitude for this rare book which he has given us; and the best way in which we can show it is to aid him and to follow him in the splendid work which he is doing in the service of our Holy Masters.

C. W. LEADBEATER

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I THINK I may say I have been a rather strenuous person for many years, for over twenty-five years now, under the inspiring guidance of my revered Chief, Dr. Annie Besant; and my strenuousness has been very much on the physical plane. I confess to having thought little of what people call "higher things," of causes and of origins, of theories of life, of planes of nature, of hierarchies of beings, and so forth. I have had work to do in the outer world, and I have tried to do it, and have not concerned myself with whys and wherefores. Whenever I have studied, I have studied specifically to the immediate ends of a particular piece of work. I have never studied for study's sake. I have never cared for wisdom for what wisdom is, but for what wisdom can do. My universe is full of the things I need. If I could not relate a thing to my work, then that thing has been out of my perspective, at all events for the time being. I have been one-pointed,

even though I may have turned my eyes from much upon which they might usefully have rested.

But during the last year or so I have been making a discovery. I have discovered that however much I may have been strenuous on the physical plane, this physical plane strenuousness has been almost as nothing compared with my strenuousness on other planes. This is probably the case with everybody, but it came as a great surprise to me on the physical plane. I began at once to realise that I must cease to live in these plane-tight compartments. I must begin to live on many planes simultaneously. I began to realise that the one life unites all planes and all things; and that in reality there is nothing which should be indifferent to me. Everything is related to everything else, and everything modifies everything else. Why, the far-distant Sun Himself presses physically upon every part of the world, as science itself teaches us

So I brooded much upon this unity, both in and out of the body, and tried to live more from the universal than from the particular. The result has been, I hope, bigger living, more effective living. But I had no clear perception of unity, only a sense of it, a vague idea of it

just sufficient to make life strangely and intriguingly different.

One night, however, I suddenly awoke with a most vivid remembrance of a supreme exaltation, of a marvellous expansion of consciousness, absolutely indescribable, though then and there I felt I must somehow or other record it on paper. It was about 1 a.m., and part of me was very much disinclined to take the trouble to sit up and write, even though pencil and paper was by my bedside—as has been my habit for some time in case an idea came during the fruitful hours when sleep minimises physical interference. But another part of me insisted. So I sat up and wrote that with which this book begins, and I remember hearing: “This is Nirvana.” And I knew it was Nirvana. I was immensely astonished, I confess, for I had never before given a thought to Nirvana, at all events on the physical plane. What I wrote was very strange to me at first. My waking consciousness was not accustomed to reflect Nirvanic consciousness, and the process of remembrance was physically painful. However I wrote down all that came to me, and my pencil found it exceedingly difficult to travel at the rate at which the thoughts poured through. I could hardly read my own

handwriting, so fast I wrote ; and certainly I hardly knew what I was writing. I wrote for hours, and was all aglow with exaltation. The whole of my being seemed re-oriented. I was born again ; and when the day came I found all changed. A new note had been sounded in my being, new values had come to everything, and since then I have been occupied in readjustment, so that I may gradually blend my old world with my new world. Practically the whole of the book has been written either between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. or between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., and many nights have been passed in the physically painful, though spiritually wonderfully uplifting, process of striving to hold a reflection of Nirvana in the physical brain and in the waking consciousness.

Needless to say, even the most beautiful description of Nirvana which could be conceived out here must inevitably be nothing less than a caricature of Nirvana as it in reality is. What then must my poor efforts be ! It is almost a blasphemy to publish them, even as a feeble attempt to indicate a shadow of Nirvanic glories. They fall indescribably short of the reality. Yet it seems to be better to have even these than nothing, and many who have read some extracts have felt an upliftment. With

Bishop Leadbeater's encouragement, therefore, this book is issued as a poor sketch by an unpractised hand, conveyed through deadening media, of a world of incomparable glories. I ought to add that even the glories I know can only be those of the very lowest sub-plane of Nirvana, and even then only a few of the glories of this sub-plane, for I have only just been born into Nirvana, and have yet to develop the senses appropriate to my new world.

As time passes, however, more and more of Nirvanic consciousness penetrates my being, and it is as if I had begun a stupendous journey from a great Resurrection to an Ascension the glories of which are as different from those of Nirvana as is the Sun from our Earth.

I hope the account of my own experiences will help others to contact this royal consciousness of Nirvana. It is within the near reach, no doubt, of many; while some today, and many in days gone by, have known Nirvana as I can only hope to know it after long effort and concentration. My own description is not, of course, of Nirvana as it actually is, even on the lowest sub-plane. It is of Nirvana as it has appeared to me, of as much of Nirvana as I have been able to assimilate. Much of the description is doubtless coloured by my personality.

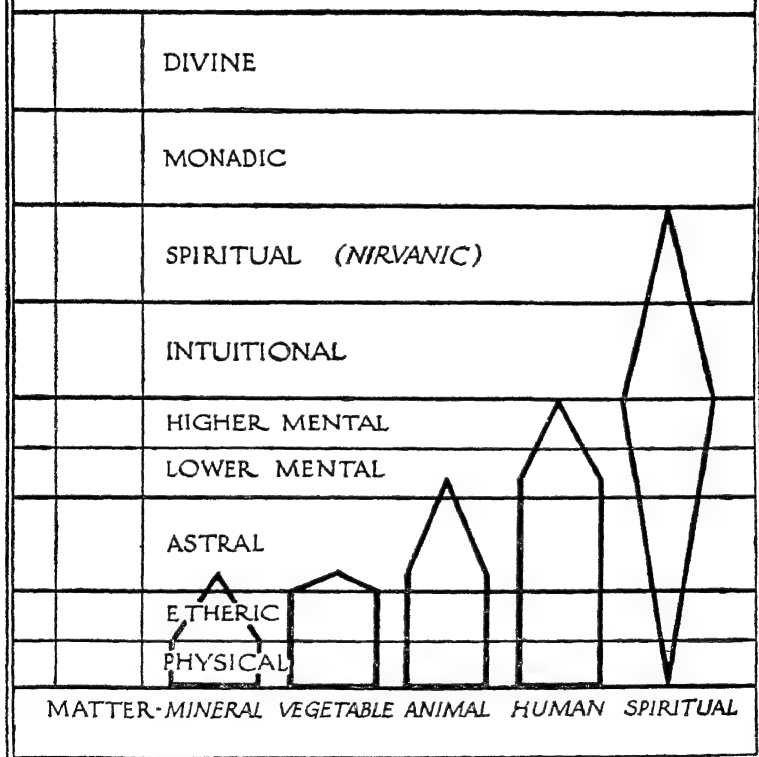
Another description, totally different, might well be quite as true, possibly far more true. I can only say I have done the best I could with the powers at my disposal, and I am well aware that the narrative is in many ways made up of a number of disconnected parts. The reason for this is that I have written night after night as I was moved to write, without thought of what I had already written. Each section is, therefore, the pen-impression of a particular vision of the Nirvanic landscape, just as it impressed itself upon me at the time

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

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PLANES OF LIGHT



NOTE *The Intuitional Plane is referred to throughout the text as the Buddhist Plane]*

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST GLIMPSE

Magnificent

The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as ere I had beheld In front
The sea lay laughing at a distance, near
The solid mountains shone, bright as the
 clouds,
Green-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light ;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn,—
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the fields

Ah ! need I say, dear Friend, that to the brim
My heart was full, I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me, bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning
 greatly,
A dedicated Spirit On I walked,
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives

WORDSWORTH,

(*The Prelude*, Bk IV.)

MY first remembrance is of seeing the Master
K.H. looking as I had never seen Him before.
Radiant He is always, supremely radiant, but

now He was more than radiant, and I cannot find a word down here to describe Him in the glory in which I perceived Him with the first flash of Nirvanic consciousness. Majestic and radiant are poor words—"blinding" perhaps expresses it better, for just for a moment I was overwhelmed. I almost wanted to veil my face from sight of Him, and yet I could not keep my eyes from Him, so unfathomably splendid did He appear—only less glorious than the KING as I afterwards realised, though at the time no greater glory could I conceive.

I summon up my courage. I feel as if He were saying to me: "Welcome to a new kingdom which you must learn to conquer." In His power my consciousness unfolds, and I step as it were across a threshold into Nirvana. Words and phrases, however beautiful, however majestic, almost desecrate as they strive to describe conditions there. Even the faint touch of first experience of this lofty level dwarfs into insignificance all other experiences of all other planes, save only the entry into the Presence of the One Initiator. I remember my first glimpse of the Buddhic plane on the occasion of admission to the ranks of the Great White Brotherhood. I recall to this day my marvelling at the vision of the Master in His Buddhic vehicle;

and well do I remember in the days that followed, the wondrous sense of unity with all things, with the trees and flowers, feeling with them all, growing with them and in them, suffering and rejoicing in and with them. I remember, too, the casting off of the friend of ages—the causal body, and I remember a vivid rending contrast between the moment before and the moment after the glimpse into the new kingdom.

But today the Master seems to me as One whom I have never known before, robed in the glories of a Kingdom I am entering as a little child. The new consciousness enfolds me, and in a moment my world is full of new, strange, glorious values. All is different, supremely different, though the same. A new Divinity is open to my eyes, and unfolds to my gaze a new meaning, a new purpose. It is the Buddhic unity transcended, glorified—a more marvellous unity; in some wonderful way it is merged in a state vaster and more tremendous. There is something even more true than unity, something more real. It seems impossible, and yet it is so.

What is the nature of that of which even Buddhic glory is but a limitation? I must use words, and words seem a terrible anti-climax.

I can only say it is the Glory of a Light Transcendent, a world of Light which is the image of God's own Eternity. Face to face do I seem to be with an "unspotted mirror" of His Power and with an image of His Goodness. And the mirror, the image, is an endless ocean of Light, of which I become (though in one sense I already have been) a part, by an apotheosis of at-one-ments on plane after plane below. Brotherhood in the outer world; unity in the Buddhist world, light transcendent in Nirvana. And if on the threshold I am transported by its glory, how shall it be when I begin to ascend to the summit? Description falters even before this first lifting of the veil. Thought and feeling distort and narrow infinitely. At best one can but suggest and hint. The rest is a matter of individual incommunicable experience.

This Light Transcendent is even nearer to the Real than the Buddhist Unity which hitherto had seemed the most stupendous fact in all the world. Light the beginning; Light the path; Light the future. God said, "Let there be Light," and there was and is Light indescribable. Beautiful as is the light in the world, it is but the faint and feeble image of the Light Triumphant—the adjective somehow seems appropriate—of these regions of the Real. It

is the Sun-Light of the Sun ere it descends into the forms in which we know it. It is Light purified of form. It is Light which is the Life of form. It is an ever-present "intimation of immortality," a future within the Now, and yet Eternal. It is an—I do not say "the"—apotheosis and essence of the light we know. All the glory of the most wonderful dawn (and one feels nothing can be more wonderful than a perfect Eastern dawn) is brought to glorious fruition and splendid perfection in the noon-day which is Nirvana. The glory of the Buddhistic plane is but the dawning of a Nirvanic Day.

Yet, as I write these words, I remember knowing, as I stood awe-struck upon the threshold of Nirvana, that beyond even that, to me, supreme unfoldment lay unfathomable, immeasurable splendours, to which Nirvana itself—the noon-day of the Buddhistic dawning—is but as a dawn, a promise, a shadow. I could sense this. I had to sense it to preserve my balance. I must hold fast to proportion even in these stupendous regions. That Unity could be transcended I knew, for was not the Light-Glory before my eyes? But there is more even than Light-Glory. Some day in the far-off future I shall know a Glory that is even more than the Glory of Light.

God is Light, Light is God. Man is Light. All is Light. A new meaning to the ancient Egyptian exhortations · “Look for the Light !” “Follow the Light !” Perceive and learn to be at one with the Light of God in all things I look upon the world. I see the world in terms of Light. God-Light in manifestation in man-light, in rock-light, in tree-light, in creature-light. All is light—a blinding glory at the centre, translated into colour as it radiates towards its circumference. The blinding glory everywhere—the God-Light—the blazing seed of futurity in each individual thing in every kingdom. And the light-seed breaks up its whiteness (the word seems wrong, but “Lightningness” is awkward) into the colours of the spectrum.

In each kingdom of Nature, seven great pathways of colour, potential in each pathway in the beginning, unfolding into glorious fruition at the close I see the diamond, the ruby, the emerald, the sapphire—kings of the mineral kingdom—superb in the perfection of their colours. Yet at the bottom these glories exist, imprisoned, slowly being released through the evolutionary process, until they stand free and splendid as the kingdom’s jewels. In every kingdom it is the same. The free once

more imprisoned that a still mightier and more splendid freedom may be achieved. The flower of every kingdom an unfolded colour-glory, passing thence from freedom to imprisonment anew to win a nobler freedom. Of course, the word "imprisonment" is hardly accurate. It is only imprisonment in the sense of not having yet conquered. Rather is it in one sense a new freedom, a new power set free to ascend still nobler heights of splendour.

Another image in my consciousness is of a Light-nucleus, imprisoned lightning, charged with the spirit of Divinity, as a Sun below the horizon of the world, or of a kingdom of Nature, or of an individual member of a kingdom of Nature, as the evolutionary process in each case begins. All is darkness and silently still. Life sleeps on the bosom of the Infinite. Higher and higher ascends the nucleus of Light, radiating ever upwards and outwards. Life stirs into activity, the world awakes. The dawn is at hand. A faint light glows, the rose of Light as tenderness softly touching the eyes of the sleeping world. From out the dawn in its tenderness comes the dawn in its iridescent vigour—a wonderful aurora of colour—a veritable spectrum of Light. And then all colours bend before their Lord and

Master, merging themselves in Him. The Sun has risen and passes onwards to the glory of a perfect day. The perfect Dawn is the Light which is Buddhi, but Nirvana is the Light which is the Day; not yet the Eternal Noon-tide, but a partial consummation of the dawn.

Out of sleep and dream I am awake, though to regions beyond I may still be dreaming. But the dream is true, for it is the vision of the final conquest of the kingdom of man and the standing upon the threshold of the kingdoms of the superman. Let me try to put my vision otherwise. I look upon the world, and I see our Lord the Sun expressed in myriad suns. Each monad I perceive to be a Sun in miniature. The Sun Divine throws off spark-suns charged with all His attributes. The process of evolution begins, and these sparks burst into colour, or rather gradually unfold in terms of colour; rainbows with sun-hearts, or nuclei or centres. God's Light imprisoned in form transcends form, thus acquiring self-consciousness. Every atom of light is an atom of unconscious Divinity, slowly but surely fulfilling the will of the Sun that it shall become unfolded into self-conscious Divinity. Every atom is a Sun, unconscious, and shall

become a Sun self-conscious. And the Sun-Light, which is the Light that is free, shines upon the Sun-Light, which is the Light imprisoned; Light, the wanderer in the darkness, until the Light within and the Light without blend into a perfect whole.

Bathed in the lightning-standing-still which is Nirvana, I perceive the imprisoned lightnings in all things. I perceive the Light which is dull—the savage, the Light which is bright—the man evolved; the Light which is glory—the Superman, the Master. I see colour everywhere in process of transmutation, of glorification, of transcendence. There is no blackness anywhere in the sense of a negation of Light. God said: "Let there be Light." And there was and is light everywhere. "His Light shineth even in our darkness."

Everywhere in God's workshop of the world, Master-Painters, Master-Singers, Master-Sculptors, Master-Builders at work. Sun-Light the common material. Sun-Light fashioned into forms—colour-forms, sound-forms, forms of every kind; but all Sun-Light. And we are apprentices to these Masters of Crafts, and fashion after them in our childish ways. Yet we, too, are some day to become Master-Craftsmen, Masters of the Light in the future

as we are children of the Light to-day. From darkness our Masters of the Light lead us to the Light, from the darkness of unconscious divinity into the pure white radiance of Divine Self-Consciousness. But all this is in terms of time. In the Nirvanic consciousness I can for an instant transcend time. There is no becoming, no dawning, no colour—only a perfect Light-Radiance, beginningless and endless. It is thus that Nirvana is Bliss, and I know now why some Great Ones enfold Themselves in it to the end of the Age. It is a supreme consummation, and opens out a Pathway of stupendous glory.

I look upon nations, upon peoples, upon faiths, upon communities—colours each of these in the universal spectrum, and yet each a spectrum in itself. I must study these colours, that I may the more purposefully serve. I see Australia. I see our Australian Section—the Sun-nucleus of the Australian continent. I see the colour-scheme of things everywhere. I see that colour matters infinitely, in the little things as well as in the big. For everywhere is a message as well as an individual growth. There is a message in the colour of the clothes we wear, in the colour of our furniture, of our objects of

daily use, in our music and drama and painting; yes, and even in our magazine, *Advance! Australia*. Does its blue printing speak its message truly? Does not black printing convey less of God's message than colour printing?

I know the power of Light, and therefore the power of colour. The Nirvanic Light is power, not cold power, but blazing power, at least as I sensed it. And even the word "power" is a limitation, for I know now in a measure that I can begin to understand the meaning of the three great attributes of God-Light—Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence. I see each colour emerging from its archetype, descending into darkness, ascending into Light. At first faint, dim, crude, changing from shade to shade. The swinging of the pendulum of growth between the colours of darkness and the colours of Light. Gradually, slowly, the fiercer hues of the colours of discord and of hatred mellow into the splendid shades of Love.

I know the Universes to be colour-schemes. One universe a rose scheme, another a yellow scheme, a third a blue scheme, and so on. What is our colour-scheme? Rose? Perhaps, and yet its heart is the blinding, glorious Light containing within itself all light-rates within the mighty octave of its Being.

I am living in a Light-Eternity. I descend into a Colour-Time. Time is the breaking up of Light-Eternal into colour; and there is the Light of the past, the Light of the present, the Light of the future. Yet all within an Eternal Now.

The world seems new with a new sacredness. The Power of the Light is in all things. Through our very physical senses we touch the Light which is Divinity. It lies about us, and in us. As we have variations round a music-note or music-theme or motif, so is the world an almost infinite number of variations upon the theme of the Universal Light. It is a Symphony of Light, of which all other symphonies—of sound, of colour, of forms of all kinds—are but partial expressions. The process of evolution is a process of the individualisation of Light on the way to re-universalisation on the plane of self-consciousness. Music is Light. Fire is Light. The Arts and the Sciences are Light in evolution growing under the laws of light. The Scriptures tell us of the Light. There is a great Gospel of the Light, whence comes every faith, and to proclaim which comes every Saviour. Light is right, darkness is wrong. We grow towards the Light as do the trees and flowers.

I see our Lord the Sun in each of us. Is the heart the sun of our body-world? Does the blood reflect His rays? Light-terms, Light-formulæ.

What is Nirvana? The Light Divine. I am touching, perhaps only for a moment, its lowest reaches, its densest layers. All I have written is but of the Light Divine in its lowest Nirvanic aspect. I cannot conceive down here even this Glory, but it leaves in me as I return to earth a new perception of Reality. I have taken a step nearer to the Real. There is a greater comradeship in the world than I had thought—a deeper identity, a more glorious origin, a more glorious way, and a more glorious goal. Round me everywhere and at all times are God's Sunshine Messengers. Every colour speaks His Word and His Voice. Every form breathes His purpose. I, dust in the Sunshine, yet am part of it, and looking upward to the Sun I see the sign of my own Divinity, and the embodied promise of my ultimate achievement. As is our Lord the Sun so shall we all be, for He has willed it so.

Light is language, thought, vesture and vehicle. A flash of light conveys for us down here a whole philosophy. The whole of this pitifully feeble amount of Nirvanic experience was doubtless within a single flash of Nirvanic

Light penetrating my being, or rather perhaps stirring at last from age-long dormancy within me.

Light is the Will of the Sun, the Wisdom of the Sun, the Love of the Sun. It is written in books that Nirvana is bliss. Even from the outermost region, at the frontiers, I know Nirvana to be *infinitely* more. Just one glimpse and all things seem to be made new, within me and without me. I remain, yet am wholly changed, and everything round me seems to be undergoing a process of revaluation. Even now, everything means far more than before. Every object, in every kingdom, seems in one way far more a shadow of Reality than a reality, for I perceive how feeble and inadequate must be all reflections of the Light. I did not know before that they were so feeble. And yet, equally true is it that every object is far more real, far less of a shadow of Reality, than I had thought. I see the prison-opportunity of form, and I perceive the shadows. I see the unfolding splendour of the Light-Eternal, and I perceive the Real. All other worlds are shadow-worlds compared with this Nirvanic world. And yet they are more real worlds because of this Nirvanic world, for I now perceive the seal of God's purpose set upon all things,

and I must reverence all things in far deeper measure than before.

Philosophers talk of pure Being. I seem to be able to sense what pure Being must be, not because I have contacted it, but because I have contacted that which is less short of pure Being than all other consciousness-states I have so far experienced. At present, speaking as a child in this new kingdom, Nirvana to me is pure Life, Life which is Light. Not that colour has faded into this Light. Colour remains, but the spectrum of Nirvana is a glorification indescribable of the colour-spectra of the planes below. It is more Light than colour. Indeed, only as I grow a little accustomed to the Light, and my sensitiveness increases, beginning to adapt itself to its new environment, do I begin to perceive that within Nirvanic Light are marvellous manifestations of colour apotheoses, of colour relationships, schemes and interactions. For the moment, the sense of evolution is lost in the blinding glory of the Light. As I become more at home in a Home one never thinks to own until one enters at its doors, I shall realise, as I do not yet realise, that the eternal truth remains true, and becomes more true; that to enter the Sun-Light, which is another way of saying to love God, there is

only one road—the service of that Light which lighteth every man.

Thus, with a new power which I shall learn to use, do I seem to enter upon a deeper service. We are children of the Sun, sparks of this glorious Sun-Light. I look up into the sky and I see my King. Sun-worshippers worship more truly, perhaps, than they know. I, infinitesimal, ignorant and feeble, yes, even I, am a servant of the Sun. As He shines upon the whole universe, so must I shine upon my world. I must be sunshine, even as He is sunshine. It is sometimes said that we cannot see God. I think I can see Him in part, and know something of His sublimity, as I look upon the Sun. Even with my physical eyes, I know something of His glory, and the whole world around me is His glory in manifestation. But looking upon Him from the Nirvanic world, I know far, far more. Another veil is lifted, and a fuller Glory shines upon me.

No words can express my new sense of Him. It is, and must be, a mystery beyond words, beyond feeling, beyond even thought. Indeed, I must not even make the attempt; it is little short of blasphemy. But in the First Epistle General of St John, beginning at the fifth verse of the first chapter, it is written :

This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

And again in the second chapter of the same Epistle, beginning at the ninth verse :

He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

A simple message, but profoundly true. "In Him is no darkness at all, neither shadow of turning." Upon us all shines His Light perpetual. May we ever dwell in the Light through the service of our brethren.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST READJUSTMENT

IT is curious how, as the days pass, one becomes increasingly conscious of a readjustment to one's surroundings, as well as of a perpetual contact with the non-physical. My relationships with outer things have altered. It may be that the Buddhist unity has itself become intensified, for more of reverence seems *due* to everything—to inanimate as much as to animate objects. I must lift things more carefully, deliberately. I must touch things with more refinement in the touch. I must use things with a greater sense of the purpose to which (there is no exaggeration in the statement) they are dedicated. Nothing slipshod or careless is tolerable.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell,
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster

There is much profound truth in these lines. Through increased reverence the music does become vaster. I perceive divinity in the fountain-pen with which I write these words. It seems unfair to the pen if I do not try to write carefully and neatly. The pen suffers other than physically if ill-treated, if used less reverently than it might be used. I seem to be educating my surroundings all the time, largely by my general attitude, but in no small measure by my more overt comradeship with the things that constitute them. My office tools depend upon me, look up to me. All this may be the intensification of the Buddhist principle, but it is more than this. Am I getting nearer to the truth when I suggest that the Unity of Buddhi is more an outward, forthgoing process, while the Unity of Nirvana is more an inward, indrawing process? Do I at the Buddhist stage perceive my oneness with the world, and at the Nirvanic stage perceive the potentiality of all things within me? I think there is something of this kind, for our Lord the Sun seems at the Nirvanic stage to become the centre of my being.

As I have already written, the Sun seems to be my King, and I realise that down here I must be a sun, the sun of my world, as He is the

Sun of His system. In Him is the source of all life. In me, too, is the source of all life, because I am in Him, and of His Being His rays pervade worlds. Do not mine, however feebly, pervade a world? I am an infinity in the becoming. Nothing is lacking in my nature to that stupendous end—the word “end” is, of course, absurd. I am light even as He is Light. The Nirvanic consciousness seem to produce a realisation of oneself as a throbbing, pulsating energy or power-nucleus, slowly but surely expanding, extending its kingdom far and wide, and itself becoming more and more radiant as its frontiers are pushed forward into space. I can conceive that in the infinitely distant future my body shall be a Sun and my kingdom a universe. I am brought face to face with my *potentiality*; it is a marvellous and stupendous grandeur: omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence—in the becoming. I enter my Sanctum Sanctorum. I enter the essence of my being. I perceive a burning, blinding Sun—a miniature of the Sun Himself.

It seems to me also that I am in constant contact with all outside me. This is probably a way of putting the fact that I am conscious on the plane of Universal consciousness, on which time and space are non-existent. An act

of consciousness—and I contact whatever I desire to contact. It is not a question of going anywhere, of projection, but rather of tuning, and not even of tuning, but rather of attending. The act of attention makes the contact.

Of course, I am only at the very beginning of this, and I express myself badly and uncertainly, because I am merely a child, and use child-language to express unfamiliar relationships and to describe conditions about which I know next to nothing. I am just like a baby describing all it met on its first journey into the streets of the town, or the roads and lanes of the country-side. I have received impressions, but these filter through undeveloped organs. Still, perhaps you sense the truth within the halting picture

William James in one of his books has said that the nightingale of life's eternal meaning is for ever singing in men's hearts. From the standpoint of the Nirvanic consciousness I realise that this is profoundly true, but it means far more than probably he intended it to mean. The eternal meaning of life is indeed forever singing in men's hearts, but it is not, I think, until Nirvanic consciousness is opened that one begins to hear the song. When one does begin to hear it in one's own heart, simultaneously

one seems to hear it in the hearts of all things, even though it sings as yet to ears that are deaf. And then one knows that there is but one great Song of Life echoed in the hearts of men and things, be its variations infinite.

Such knowledge is it that brings one to a realisation of the nature of Universal Consciousness. Hearing the Song of Life in harmony of Glorious Light and Colour in its Nirvanic manifestation, one hears the sound of its eternal meaning in all things, and it is but an act of consciousness to hear its note in any particular individuality, and thus to contact that individuality intimately. It is, then, but a matter of tuning-in on to the wave-length required. The wireless apparatus is installed, even though very far from running smoothly, and I seem able to tune-in to all manner of things everywhere, to persons, to friends, to events, even though I may only rarely be able to hear accurately. I see the "dead" living on in other bodies, and with us all the time. I see the "living" in other parts of the world as near to me as those in physical propinquity. I can draw the whole world into me, and thus annihilate time and space. How much more than this world, so far as regards its sub-Nirvanic states, I may be able thus to draw in,

I do not know. But I realise that in super-Nirvanic states it will be not a world, but a Universe, and so on and on.

How true it is that language in this case conceals thought and meaning ! I need Nirvanic language to convey the sense of Nirvanic things, and my hearers need Nirvanic understanding. How impossible to convey the sense of more-ness in a medium which stops short at that very more-ness ! Still, perhaps you have an impression of that wondrous more-ness, though until you can see, I cannot truly tell. As Myers has said so beautifully :

O, could I tell, ye surely would believe it !
O, could I only say what I have seen !
How should I tell or how can ye receive it,
How, till He bringeth you where I have
been ?

The more one immerses oneself in even this lowest layer of Nirvanic consciousness the greater becomes the clarification of consciousness on the lower planes. It is like a fresh, pure stream of energy flowing through the great channels of life and vivifying the outlook at every stage. We are continually working under the Law of Readjustment, and each expansion of consciousness involves a further readjustment to the Eternal Reality. Purer

and purer becomes the refracting medium as kingdom after kingdom of consciousness is conquered, till at last the Light of the Real shines through undimmed, or as nearly undimmed as is possible in the Universe of the Relative.

One of the most striking examples of this clarification is in the discovery that it is far more possible definitely to know God than I had supposed. Does one attain a vision of God, of the Creator, in a Form capable of being understood by human consciousness? I seem to have perceived God, not as an abstraction but as a cognisable Reality—a Universality within a limitation, but the limitation rarefied enough to reveal to me in deeper measure the nature of the Universality of God. The expression is unsatisfactory, but it is as if I had experienced the Individuality of God. And the whole experience centres round the Sun which, putting it bluntly, I perceive to be the Physical Vehicle of God whereby He creates, gives, sustains and regenerates life. The Sun is, as it were, the Countenance of God, the Light of which shines upon all things. A little more and I could describe, in so far as description is at all possible, a manner of God's revealing of Himself on this Nirvanic Plane. Not God in veiled I cannot see, Him unveiled. The part

cannot know the Whole as Whole. But I can see Him as He interposes a shadow before my eyes To me that shadow, iridescent with God, is God, even though but a shadow. I see God in limitation. The part perceives a shadow of the Whole. Upon the ocean of Nirvana God casts His Shadow. Upon the ocean of every plane God casts His Shadow, and on every plane we may perceive it. The higher the consciousness the more is the Shadow a mirror of His being

I realise, too, more vividly the nature of Heaven, and somehow it does not seem so absurd to place Heaven in the heavens as I had thought. Of course, Heaven is a State of Consciousness There are many Heavens. Nirvana is a Heaven-world, infinitely greater than that mental plane to which we usually restrict the title. But is not the blue sky a Heaven in special measure? If I free myself from the bondage of earth and body restrictions, and bathe myself in the sky above the clouds, do I not experience a peace and a sense of the all-Power, the all-Wisdom and the all-Love of God, which inevitably decreases as I return to the physical level?

I seem also to be able to some extent to apply Eternity to the terms of Time. Do I not contact

in some degree the Eternal Mind, or, should I say more truly, the Cosmic Mind, and then the Cosmic Emotions and the Cosmic Physical Plane? What is the difference between these Cosmic States and their denser counterparts? The first word that comes to me to express the difference is "Majesty". Mind stripped of all Time-mentality, of all constituents of the mental plane as we know it. Mind filled with the spiritual counterparts, the archetypes, of the constituents of our mental plane. The Cosmic Mind is an archetypal Mind which reflects itself in the objects of the mental plane. It is not Absolute Mind, but the nearest approach to Absolute Mind that I can so far conceive. The positive and the negative, the subject and the object, have disappeared, and there is pure Mind, Mind without the contrast between I and not-I, since the one is merged in the other

The same experience obtains on the plane of the emotions. On this Cosmic plane I contact Cosmic Emotion, which impresses me as being Power in Motion. Again, as in the case of the Cosmic Mind, I cease to sense the pairs of opposites. There is no fundamental division of love-emotions and hate-emotions; they are mutually merged in archetypal

emotion. I contact pure emotion, pure feeling, but not absolute emotion or absolute feeling. I sense the difference because I perceive a beyond, though I do not know the nature of that beyond. These two Cosmic states are reservoirs which feed their corresponding lower planes, and I see how the pairs of opposites down here emerge from a Unity within or above, but I feel sure that this very Unity itself is but relative. Further still within or above there is a still deeper Unity, compared with which the Unity I now contact is a world of diversity.

I perceive an Apotheosis of Death. There is no death, only change, and always change with purpose, change to a greater end. Death is re-creation, renewal, the dropping of fetters, the casting aside of a vehicle which has ceased to suffice. Death is in very truth a birth into a fuller and larger life, or a dipping down into matter under the law of readjustment. Progress always, and progress towards Unity. We come ever nearer to each other and to the Real through death. If only we could realise this !

I turn for a change to myself. I somehow know that my aura has undergone, or is undergoing, a process of readjustment. Wherever

there is an expansion of consciousness there is a modification in the aura. What modification is being brought about in my own? It seems as if it were being irradiated with Nirvanic Light. It has an electric intensity it did not before possess. The colours are in process of rearrangement, apparently in rings like the rings of Saturn. Possibly, indeed probably, this process began before, but the entry into Nirvanic consciousness has given it a great impetus. The silver light-threads of Nirvana seem to interpenetrate the whole aura, enriching and purifying the colours, and encircling, interpenetrating, my whole being, with a Web of Light. The aura scintillates with Sun-Light. The aura sparkles in the Sun.

Each centre (there are many centres) glows with the new life and the new promise. Am I in the springtime of a new Cosmic year, of which the summer of spiritual maturity is the Fifth of the Great Initiations, to the threshold of which sooner or later I shall come? "Conquer this kingdom and you stand on the threshold of the next." The seed of my being has thrust its Light-shoots through the souls of lower planes, and a bud is opening to the Sun in the pure Nirvanic air. Some day this bud will become a flower—a flower of earth's

humanity in the garden of God. Every root shall grow its bud as it sends up its Light shafts through the unreal into the real. As Heaven-Light kisses Earth-Light the bud takes form and slowly expands into the flower. I seem to see, as this imagery comes to me, *the* Flower of Earth's Humanity—the Lord Buddha, a Flower of indescribable splendour, a radiant Lotus-form of golden Light.

CHAPTER III

THE INNER LIGHT UPON OUTER THINGS

AS the glow comes before the fire, the dawn before the sunrise, so must we all glow in all our bodies as a sign that the Sun-Light is setting us on fire. We all need in this sense to be set on fire, that we may gradually become one with the Fire Eternal. We cannot know God as He is until we become all fire, even as He is all fire. Open your hearts, then, to His Sunlight, that your whole being may some day burst into flame, and thence into many flames—flames of Power, of Wisdom, and of Love. In each one of us the spark is ready, the spark of Divinity waiting to become a Fire. Nothing can extinguish this spark, however dimly it may glow. At last the time must come for its emergence into flame, and thence into that Fire which till then has slept in the world of the potential.

We are set ready for the lighting. Let us concentrate the Rays of our Lord the Sun

upon ourselves through the burning-glass of aspiration and of service. May our service and our aspiration glow with the warmth of understanding, the warmth which stimulates with the light of wisdom, the wisdom which clarifies, with the burning of power, the burning which purifies. I seem to have here a note of a great Ritual of Light which is the medicine of the future. Light the Healer, Light the Redeemer, the Creator, the Preserver, the Regenerator. The inoculations and drugs of the future will be Light-variants, and the very food we eat will be concentrated Light, the form being used to collect, in varying ways, the sustenance which is the Sunlight.

I see our Lord the Sun distributing Himself through His Universe, extending Himself through its immeasurable distances. I see his world learning gradually to use Him in His myriad aspects to meet its many needs. There is to be a great Science, a great Philosophy, of Light—intensely applicable to everyday life. We become in a wonderful way children of the Sun, partakers of His Life. There comes about a Eucharist of Light.

I see these things to be, and I see our Lord the Sun growing because He shines. He grows by shining. So must we. As we shine so we

grow I look over a world in darkness. I see lighthouses—ourselves. We are beacon lights. We warn from the ways of ignorance, we point to the ways of wisdom. We warn from rocks, we show the harbours. Our light, as the light of other lighthouses, is the gift of the Sun. How much we owe to Him !

I compare the Buddhist plane with the Nirvanic. I strive to distinguish. It is very difficult to express the facts at all accurately. I seem to see in the former an act of coalescence and in the latter an act of identity. I perceive the former to be the assertion, the realisation, of Unity amidst, above, resolving diversity, while I perceive the latter to be a condition of receding from all diversity, with a consequent readjustment, reconfiguration, rearrangement of the Unity, so that it becomes a Oneness. Buddha the One with the Second, Nirvana the One without a second. And beyond Nirvana ? Even the One changes, casts aside another of the sheaths of the Real.

I see that we evolve under the laws of counterpart and reflection. The world of Nirvana itself is a sublimated counterpart of the world below. The planes above Nirvana are sublimated counterparts, each in its own degree, of the Nirvana below them, the quality

and nature of the counterpart being determined by the Light-vibration quality of the plane.

The development of the Nirvanic consciousness seems to affect the spirillæ in the brain, the kundalini, and the various centres generally ; as also, of course, the various bodies. I am conscious of a much more intense sensitiveness, of being much more highly strung ; I am, as it were, an extremely sensitive plate, rather over-sensitive for the crudities of the outer world. Probably I shall tone down in due course, but in the earlier stages outer living becomes almost painful. One seems to know people and things far more accurately, they become impressed upon me as they are, rather than as they seem to be

It would seem that as the causal body disintegrates when the individual enters the Buddhic plane, so is it with the Buddhic vehicle as one enters the Nirvanic plane. This seems inevitable on what I call the plane of apotheoses. the essential plane, the plane of fundamental archetype. I notice that I do not write "archetypes," and the reason seems to be that from one point of view there is no plurality on the Nirvanic plane. Plurality begins on the plane below, and even there it is plurality overshadowed, dominated, by Unity. Of course, as

one descends, the various bodies of lower planes are re-formed out of the matter of the planes according to the vibration rate of the permanent atom

Why cannot anyone enter Nirvana ? It is a question of time, of course, and a question as to how the time is occupied. Entry into Nirvana involves an expansion of consciousness, and the lesser expansions must precede the greater. It seems to be a matter of Sense of Reality. It is not enough to know what is called Truth. One must know something of what *is* Truth, which is generally quite another matter, and the Truth of things cannot be learned from books, or speeches, except in part. These help, as does also experience. But in some way one must not only discover Truth through experience, but also through a reaching out into that which is beyond experience—gradually making experience of that beyond. Similes come into my mind. Think of one of those curious puzzle-pictures which they give to children. Each puzzle has a title, and one works to that. This piece fits in here, that piece fits in there. Gradually the picture forms and becomes complete. So is it with life, and with the various planes of consciousness.

For example, an individual entering into Buddhist consciousness obtains a general idea of Buddhist principles, and gradually the experience fulfils the principles, so that they become built into his very being. The Buddhist picture becomes well recognisable. The individual is ready, therefore, for another picture—that of Nirvana. But one cannot begin on another picture until the former is on the road to completion. It is no doubt possible to imagine the stages ahead, and the effort is very useful and helpful. But one must be strenuously working at the pictures one has already in hand, deliberately and with the realisation that in each case the principles must be fulfilled in practice.

The physical-body picture, the emotions picture, the mind picture—all must be on the road to completion, and each of us who reaches this stage must be hard at work on them all. Then only is it possible for us to be allowed to begin something still further. And we must remember that nothing short of Truth suffices. Our conception of Truth is not enough, however good it may be, however useful to us it may be. Facts, not theories, are required. Not, perhaps, absolute fact—that is still beyond us; but relatively pure fact at all events. I seem to see

the water of the emotions fructifying the seed of the mind so that it bursts into being. Similarly I see the water of the mind fructifying Buddhi, and the water of Buddhi fructifying the Nirvanic seed. But the water must be pure, otherwise the seed remains potential. When the potential within the seed becomes active, it sends out Light-rays of its own quality which contact the corresponding rays of Light without, and another Light-body is in course of formation. Up till that time the Light-rays from without passed through the vehicle hardly, if at all, affecting it. But now they find response to their stimuli, and in interaction the Light-body comes into being.

I have for some time been striving to bring down into the physical brain the means whereby translation takes place into this new field of consciousness—Nirvana. So far as I can contact the process, it depends upon the capacity to respond on the part of the embryonic atom of Nirvanic consciousness in myself. I seem to notice within myself these embryonic counterparts to the corresponding conditions without, passing through stages of what I must call pre-natal development, the birth into consciousness synchronising with an expansion of consciousness which may be called a sort of minor

initiation. There is the period of sleep, unconsciousness. There is the period of stirring, restlessness, the dawn of consciousness. Then there is the period of awareness—something less than awakening, yet a capacity intermittently to vibrate to corresponding conditions without. And finally there is the awakening itself, when the embryonic atom is not merely a nucleus, an embryo, but a vehicle, a body.

I presume that at the fourth of the Great Initiations the stirring of the life within the Nirvanic atom, due to Buddhist and other impacts, is marvellously vitalised from without by a great unification on the part of the One Initiator or His Deputy. A great expansion takes place, the vehicle is formed whereby entry is gained into the kingdom now to be conquered. I take my abode for the first time in a Nirvanic vehicle—if the word “vehicle” be permitted—and now the task is mine to develop the senses of this new potency, just as a little child has to learn to use his senses in the physical world.

Light, of course, is the first discovery, for it is the primary, overwhelming experience. I have spoken of “lightning-standing-still”. Entry into the Nirvanic world is as into lightning, blinding, penetrating, drenching. One

plunges into a sea of lightning. One cannot sink, but one has to learn to swim. One does not sink, because the light within makes one buoyant. It is impossible to conceive entry into this kingdom without the warrant of the awakened light within, but were such a conception possible I realise that the only result would be annihilation. And this shows me the relatively irresistible power of this lightning-Light. I have striven to describe its glorious beauty, I might now try to describe its awful power. Scientists speak of the mighty power within the atom, and of the tremendous consequences could it but be released. God tempers the Light, or we should be destroyed. Only as self-control grows stronger, and the Path of Purification is trodden with ever more rapid and firmer footsteps, are potentialities released within ourselves, the negative within uniting with the positive without.

I find, then, that the capacity, aroused in the course of the ceremony of the fourth of the Great Initiations, to respond to Nirvanic consciousness, opens to me this new kingdom. If I am correctly describing the actual process of entry, I can only suggest that it is a matter of setting up, or rather intensifying, certain potentialities of vibration, so that all that

vibrates differently falls away, or at least goes out of perspective. Do these other rates of vibration, which we may call the lower bodies, either retire into a kind of body-formula or, if they remain actually corporeal, do they lose for the time practically all save the elemental life? I start vibrating at the Nirvanic rate, and find myself in the Nirvanic consciousness. I sound the Nirvanic note, which I heard definitely for the first time during the course of the Initiation (though an echo of it may have come to me now and then before) and the portals open to my summoning.

I shall soon find that it is not in the least necessary to be physically asleep in order to contact this consciousness. It may be contacted in full waking consciousness, and I am now striving to learn to do that. But if I try to examine this further step I seem to be using the physical brain in a new way, or through new brain channels. Part of the process consists in getting temporarily out of focus, out of perspective, so far as lower planes are concerned, but this is done as in a flash. Being very infantile in this new world, I find it difficult to hold the waking consciousness simultaneously. I notice a tendency to drop off to sleep—to get out of the physical body. One curious effect is

that I seem to "see" (the word does not at all suit) with the whole of myself, and not with any one organ. It is more contact than perception, more attitude than sight.¹

I observe that Nirvanic consciousness is not a consciousness apart; it is only in the remotest degree to be correlated with the world in which we live. It is all-penetrating, and in its light there is a marvellous readjustment to Reality for everything. A similar readjustment happened in a lesser degree in the case of the lower stages, and I perceive the great expansions of consciousness, which mark the dividing lines between the kingdoms of nature, to be similar readjustments to Reality. There is nothing in the world not amenable to the Light of Nirvana, for in it things are perceived infinitely more as they are than as they seem to be. The Light of Nirvana is as a great tuning-fork. External objects, human and non-human, vibrate more or less in accord. Hence it becomes far more possible for one who has heard the Nirvanic

¹ This is the method of all planes except the physical. It is so even in astral consciousness, but it becomes more noticeable as one rises higher. And at these superior levels one learns to see every object or entity from within as well as from outside—to see it as part of oneself, or rather of the Great Self in which one is now merged. This is what our author expresses in his next paragraph.—C. W. L.

Sound to gauge the relation between the things of the outer worlds and the Nirvanic Real. Either they ring true, or not true; less real, or more real. In any case, there is unbroken relationship between all planes of consciousness. Below is a reflection, a shadow, of the above. That there is distortion is obvious, but this is because the lower has not yet learned to reflect, within the measure of its capacity, perfectly. With increasing density is increasing limitation; yet on every plane the limitation must conform to the minimum rather than to the maximum of its appropriate density

This brings me to a point which strikes me as of considerable importance. I perceive that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is not merely a truth in relation to the ceremony of the Holy Eucharist, but one of the great laws of Nature, one of the great processes of evolution. I perceive that all growth is in large measure a process of transubstantiation; not necessarily the abandonment of the lower, but rather the substitution, in increasing measure, of the more real for the less real as the motive power behind or within. Taking Nirvanic consciousness as an example, I seem to perceive that in my own being a process of

transubstantiation has taken place I still live in the outer world, and go through the routine of daily life. I think, I feel, I act, I speak I use the senses of my various bodies To outward appearances I am not at all changed. I am as much recognisable as George Arundale as ever; and the mere superficial observer will detect no change. Yet a transubstantiation has taken place, the old background has given way to a new background. A greater reality has been substituted for a lesser reality as the ensouling power of my being.

In the case of the Bread and the Wine of the Eucharist, there appears no change of outer form. Yet the consecration causes in each the substitution of the Christ-principle for the lower principles normal to these two substances. A supreme Reality has been substituted for a relatively insignificant reality. The Unity of all Life makes this possible, and indeed not merely possible but inevitable. The whole of life is a process of gradual transubstantiation, and in the Holy Eucharist we are given a striking reminder of this essential fact. Unfortunately, we do not generally realise that the ceremony of the Eucharist is an epitome of the whole ceremony of Life Life is a constant process of substitution and transubstantiation,

these being specially marked and sharply defined at every one of the great stages on the Path of Holiness. The expansion of consciousness that takes place at each of the great Initiations is nothing less than a transubstantiation; and the same is true of all lesser expansions of consciousness.

I notice in myself many interesting effects of the transubstantiation connected with the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness. I notice, for instance, a great clarification of issues. Many problems in life cease to be problems; the solution of them is obvious. Many things which I go on doing I do differently, or with other intent. The whole of daily life becomes, or is to become, an offering to the newly-realised higher. Daily life must forsake the lesser Gods for the newly-perceived greater Gods. At various stages in my existence I have been living as unto this, that or the other standard. I may have been living as unto myself, my lower self, I may have been living as unto men, or as unto a code or creed. Now I must live as unto something beyond. Perhaps, to some small extent, I have all the while been living as unto the Lord—very haltingly and feebly of course. But now I must live as unto Him less haltingly and feebly because He has

condescended to enter more closely into relationship with me through a veritable process of transubstantiation, which is the same as saying a process of self-realisation.



Mount Everest

CHAPTER IV

A MEDITATION IN THE HIMALAYAS

Northwards soared
The stainless ramps of huge Himala's wall,
Ranged in white ranks against the blue—
untrod,
Infinite, wonderful—whose uplands vast,
And lifted universe of crest and crag,
Shoulder and shelf, green slope and icy horn,
Riven ravine, and splintered precipice
Led climbing thought higher and higher, until
It seemed to stand in heaven and speak with
gods
Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp-
laced
With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds.
Lower grew rose-oaks and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's
cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles: under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars.

The Light of Asia

THE clarification of issues to which I have referred above finds valuable expression in the bringing into relief of those shadows in my nature which have yet to yield to the Light.

I know myself, I think, as never have I known myself before, and I here perceive a sharp difference between the quality of Buddhist consciousness and that of Nirvanic consciousness. The former states the Unity while the latter analyses it. Buddhi declares Unity, points to it everywhere, discloses the thread of Unity running through all things, and so unveils Truth. In Nirvana we begin to understand the constituent elements of this Unity, this Truth. Buddhi discloses the Plan; Nirvana is the beginning of its understanding.

This is a very partial statement of the facts, but perhaps it will do as a broad, rough suggestion as to the general line of difference. Through Buddhi the consciousness of Truth-Unity begins to become established. In Nirvana this consciousness becomes intensified, and the process begins of tracing its constituent elements to a more transcendent cause. From the planes below, Buddhi may well appear to be an ultimate cause. Yet, standing on the Mount of Buddhi we begin to perceive yet higher peaks, and we realise with still greater awe and wonder the increasing vastness of that mountain-range of manifested life of which even the glorious Mount of Buddhi is but a lesser peak. Dwelling on this Mount of Buddhi we cannot fully

perceive its nature, its relation to the range as a whole, though from its height we may look down upon the view below and perceive great unities of landscape where we had thought there were, as we lived among them, but barriers and diversities.

I have learned much in this direction by contemplating the great Himalayan range, the range that separates the inner from the outer world, the substance from the shadow. I have sat in meditation in the midst of this mighty earthly shadow of the spiritual landscape of the manifested Logos. I have contemplated grandeur in the microcosms of the vegetation, of the plants and trees and rocks, and in the ascending macrocosms of hills, of peaks, of mountains, of ranges, unto the consummation of Gaurishankar¹ Himself. These mighty Himalayas are a living witness to, a living reflection of, the Buddhic and Nirvanic planes—and doubtless of still higher planes, for aught I know—according to the nature of our

¹ This was for some time supposed to be the local name for Mount Everest, but more careful research shows that this is not so. Mount Everest is Peak XV of the Official Survey, and Mount Gaurishankar is Peak XX. Some have said that Gaurishankar (which means Parvati and Shiva) is a name sometimes given to the whole group of mountains. The Tibetans call Mount Everest "The White Lady of the Glaciers."

identification with them. Only in the Himalayas, and in lesser degree in other ranges, may the Voice of the Silence be heard in something of its majesty and power, uttering the Word that opens the doors between the Unreal and the Real. I perceive, thus meditating, how true it is that all planes are interpenetrating. Nowhere is Buddhi or Nirvana nearer to man than in this physical Buddhi and Nirvana of the Himalayas. It must be a marvellous experience for one in whom these higher consciousnesses are awakening to visit their counterparts carved in earthly form. As my experience has been out of the physical body, they seem to transform me, for the time being, into a veritable Cross, an insignificant, feeble, distorted, representation of Love in Manifestation. I perceive that Buddhi reflects for us down here the Eternal, all-pervading Silence, while Nirvana opens to our ears its Voice. We catch in Nirvana a syllable of its utterance. In the far-off future we may hear a Word ineffable. And then, perchance, a sentence. Some day, the mighty Language of the Gods !

This picture of the Himalayas and of their relation to these higher realms of consciousness enters strongly into my mind—not, I think, merely because they seem to be in some

wonderful way the noble physical counterparts of these mighty inner regions, but for another reason which is very elusive, though I feel I have the key to it in the dim memory of the supreme wonder of the summit of Kailasa. I can see myself—I do not for the moment notice in what vehicle—on that summit, sensing the mysterious and awesome silence, the penetrating cold, the utter aloofness, the wondrous potentiality of manifestation, from the many shades of unutterable calm and peace, the calm and peace of winter, of spring, of summer, of autumn—each different in splendour and in message, through growing unrest to the most furious, raging and cataclysmic storm. The air is alive with latent power, and I stand awestruck, humbled, reverent. Here at the summit there seems to be pure potentiality, relieved from time to time by manifestations of peace and storm. It is not what I see and feel that awes me, but that which is beyond all sight and feeling, that which is held in leash by the Logos Himself.

I find myself merging in this mighty mountain-consciousness, and I find an almost terrible sense of omnipotence. It is almost overwhelming; it would be quite overwhelming did I not suddenly understand why the experience is

accorded to me I realise the intention to be to disclose to me the splendid inevitability of the triumph of evolution. Swept up into these vortices of glorious majesty, I know at once that the supreme freedom is to attain the unattainable, to be free to accomplish even miracles. But how can the unattainable be reached? Surely there is a contradiction? No; for the unattainable is only unattainable in time, there remains eternity, and in eternity all things are possible.

It is indeed necessary for mankind to be impressed by a sense of limitation, or time would not achieve its lesson-purpose. Madness lies on the road of those who would discard limitations of which they have not learned the truths; their liberty is only within such limitations. Yet there is a liberty which transcends these, a freedom which all may contact who are learning to unite their will with the Will of God, wanderers returned to the true home after experiencing the futility of innumerable illusory homes. This freedom, by its omnipotence, enables all limitation to be transcended, for who shall say to God "Thou shalt not?" And are we not all Gods in the becoming? But only as we have learned to will as God wills can this supreme? apotheosis of freedom be

placed in our hands. Even in the outer world that which is unattainable to some is attainable to others. It is the same at all stages. But upon Mount Everest, upon its blinding summit, I know that even the most glorious picture I can conceive in the highest aspects of my being, utterly unattainable as I know it to be for an almost infinite period, is yet but a shadow of a still more glorious shadow, splendour upon splendour beyond count.

I have paid this visit to these mighty ones that I may have something by way of a physical illustration of the otherwise indescribable marvels of the Nirvanic consciousness. It is desired that I should bring as accurate a memory as possible down into the waking consciousness, so that I may grow a little wiser in Their Service. I must have, for the work which is and will be mine, an ever-present sense of Nirvana, to inspire, to strengthen, to guide. This infiltration of Nirvanic consciousness is necessary in order that, living in the world, I may keep free from its shackles—most of which I should forever have cast aside. It is a necessary stage in preparation for the last great journey in the human kingdom, the journey to Adeptship, a long, lonely, yet glorious road. The power of Nirvana is placed

in my hands that I may have the strength, the courage, the wisdom to tread my way to this final human goal I shall need it all, as I clearly perceive, for I am almost appalled as I learn what remains to be done. But after this experience, I know I can achieve, however unattainable the goal may seem.

I notice that one of the most vital lessons this experience teaches lies in the startling contrast it causes to emerge between the unreal and the Real. On Everest's summit I have been bathed in the Real. It is almost shattering to the lower bodies to endeavour to hold this Real within them. I can just do it now, though later on I may be able to do it with ease. I clearly see how infinitely true it is that one cannot serve both God and Mammon, and by Mammon in this case I mean all of the lower worlds that I should have outworn. If the physical and other bodies are to retain their hold on these higher things, if there is to be an unbroken channel between the highest and the lowest, care must be taken to ensure that there shall be no clogging of these channels by rubbish of any kind, or even by things which, though not rubbish, take up valuable room, room needed for the greater realities. I see that I have need to readjust the values of

things, that I must do things which I have not yet done, that I must not now do certain things which I normally quite naturally, and hitherto quite rightly, have done.

But this great experience of the Himalayas is not solely for the purpose of enabling me, through physical example, to bring the memory of Nirvana more accurately into the waking consciousness. It is an integral part of the very development of Nirvanic consciousness itself. Mountains are associated with the Mysteries, with Initiation and expansions of consciousness,¹ and certain parts of the Himalayas, sacred by tradition and associated with Mighty Beings, objects of deep veneration and of pilgrimage, have, by reason of their being the abode of high spiritual Intelligences, certain

¹ "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light"

Matt, XVII, 1, 2.

"And he went, as he was wont, to the Mount
of Olives and prayed"

Luke, XXII, 39, 41

"And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would and they came unto him And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach"

Mark, III, 13, 14

magnetic properties making them eminently suitable as places in which yoga of various kinds can be performed. The Himalayas have played a mighty part in both the inner and outer history of India, and indeed of the world. This part they still play—these age-old watchers of the growing world, these monuments of physical grandeur.

Their physical grandeur is a noble setting for the soul's awakening, and it seems to me that within such regions forces are available upon which to draw for the development of the newly unfolded consciousness. The Himalayan regions afford the best physical reflection of those inner grandeurs which in so many other regions can find but gross distortions. Everywhere is interaction, and experiments conducted in these surroundings, no matter on what plane, are the more fruitful for the play upon them of Himalayan magnificence.

In almost every country in the world these massive archetypes have their humbler counterparts, where may occur some of the lesser gropings of the soul. The lesser unities may well be sensed in the lesser ranges and in such sanctuaries of Peace, on plain and hill, as are still immune from the encroachments of mankind. It is still possible, even near towns and

cities, to experience initiations into wider consciousness, and wherever hills and mountains are, there some of the deeper mysteries of Life may be explored. But the Himalayas are perhaps reserved for the greater transfigurations, the greater crucifixions, the greater resurrections, and may be for the greater ascensions too.

But I must return from these glories to the point from which I had to diverge—the clarification of my individual nature. I see, as I have never seen before, the qualifications for the road which I have to travel as one marked out for the pathway of the Staff.¹ Less clearly, yet quite definitely too, I perceive the nature of the qualifications for other roads. It is as if there were set before me at this fourth great stage a stupendous choice of pathways. I may not travel on a specific pathway until I have looked upon all pathways. A Great One leads me, as in a picture gallery, along them all by turn. I see their beauties and their splendours, their difficulties and their loneliness. I wonder whether I could describe their respective landscapes.

Now choose! No hesitation, no doubt, no uncertainty. Has not the choice been made at

¹ See Appendix D

the very beginning of my being? Yes, but at this supreme moment I must ring true to myself, or the conscious choice may have to wait awhile. And as I choose unerringly the only road for me, just for the moment the road itself fades out of sight, and there is disclosed to me a splendour to which it leads. I gaze at myself as I shall be, sooner or later. I gaze at myself born, baptised, transfigured, crucified, resurrected, ascended. I know the glory of the service of the Staff, and I am immeasurably content and at peace. Long ages may pass ere I reach this splendour. Yet it is to come, and beyond it doubtless lie yet other splendours. More than enough the splendour I dimly sense in remembrance.

With the future thus unveiled for an unforgettable moment, sharply there comes to me the nature of the equipment for the journey: first, desirelessness, second, impersonality; third, truth. Above all others, those who aspire to service in the Staff must be supremely free from attachment, and this is one of the hardest of the qualifications. He belongs to no work, and to all work, to no place, and to all places, to no person and to all. He desires that which for the time is given him to do, but behind this desire is desirelessness. Having

willed to do his duty, the particular form of yearning connected with that special duty ceases, once he is no longer associated with it. In his world of great desirelessness he nevertheless wills strongly to do the duty of the moment; thus he passes from desire to desire in a life of uttermost dispassion.

Then impersonality. The work he does is not his work. It is more than likely to be that of some one else, for whom, for the time being, he deputises. The specific work of the Staff seems to be co-ordination. If I am asked what my life's work is, my reply is that I do not know, nor do I care. I can only say what my work is now, and that is enough for me. Other officers may be able to answer in terms of nation, race, or world. They may be consecrated to specific purposes, but members of the Staff seem to be more in the nature of *liaison* officers, on general co-ordination duty, with emergency activity as required. It becomes of the highest importance that members of the Staff should hold themselves definitely aloof from identification with any particular duty. They must be ready to drop a piece of work without an instant's regret, for it is just as much their duty to drop work as to undertake it. This demands a high development of

impersonality, all the more difficult to achieve, perhaps, since for so long a time we have been concerned with growth through personality. At all costs, impersonality, not cold impersonality, but burning impersonality.

Then, truth. Naturally, truth, as also the other two qualities I have already mentioned, is needed on all pathways. But members of the Staff must be specially trained to recognise and follow truth no matter what the forms. They have to do more with universal truth than with specific truth. They must hold fast to the essence of truth, so as to be able to express it and perceive it through any form. I know this sounds applicable to all departments, and so in a way it is. Yet the Staff have a distinctive relation to truth, which I am here striving to express.

I perceive these three qualifications, with their very important corollary, adaptability, to demand from me constant attention. I must develop them ruthlessly, the sooner to be able to present myself as qualified for office.

Immersion in these Himalayan range-gradations stimulates in me the sense of living in three distinct categories of consciousness in my ordinary everyday life in the outer world. It is as if I had to live in three stages or in three

dimensions of consciousness simultaneously, with a fourth dimension beyond my present contact, yet subject to awareness if not to sensation. The first category is that of individuality—the consciousness prevalent in the outer world; the Himalayan plains. The second category is that of unity—the consciousness of those upon whose horizon the sun of brotherhood is dawning; the intermediate ranges. The third category is that of universality—the consciousness of those upon whose horizon the sun of righteousness (I can think of no other word) is dawning; the mighty summits. In the first category the average individual lives and moves and has his being. He is limited by his causal body, and dwells for the most part in the lower mental and astral bodies. He is intent upon goodness for his own sake. In the second category we have the dawning of the Buddhist consciousness, a beginning to live on the Buddhist plane.

The sense of Buddhī may come, often does come, before the first of the Great Initiations, but as far as I am aware only after this great Step is it possible normally to dwell therein. Before the first great Step the Buddhist spark remains intermittent; after it the spark tends to grow constant and to expand into a blinding

light. At this stage the individual is intent upon the good of others. He begins to cease to think about his own goodness, for that is definitely established; he cannot be other than what we call good. At least that is as it should be—as in all decency it ought to be; and for the credit of mankind it generally is. But alas! even at this stage humanity is weak; “Great Ones fall back even from the very threshold”; and we have had sad examples of downfall caused by conceit and ambition. In some such cases the defaulter recognises his mistake, and begins humbly to work towards reinstatement; in others the effort is postponed until some future life. But always the fallen Initiate must come back eventually, however terrible may be the cost in suffering and delay.

At this stage he is preoccupied with the welfare of others, that he may fan in them to brighter flame the spark of their Divinity. In the first stage, the individual aspires to live according to the outer law. He is satisfied with revelation, whether general or specific and individual, and shapes his conduct in accordance therewith. This is goodness. Even where revelation has ceased to satisfy, and the demand comes for knowledge, it is less for service than for the sake of knowledge. But in the

second stage, revelation has definitely ceased to satisfy, and the demand comes for knowledge, and for more than knowledge—for experience, less for its own sake than for the power it gives to serve. This, I conceive, is more than goodness. It is the dawning of identification with the Real, as distinguished from that recognition of the Real which marks the later periods of the first stage; as conformity to the conventional marks its earlier periods. In the third stage experience is transcended. There is no question of experiencing—all is a matter of being: while service has become natural.

In the first stage, service is to the smaller self, very short-sighted and very clumsy. As time passes, it becomes more intelligent and far-seeing, and the demands of this smaller self are seen to depend for their satisfaction upon harmonisation with the demands of other small selves. As the second stage is entered, the happiness of the smaller self is seen to depend upon the service of others; and sacrifice grows more and more complete. In the third stage there is an apotheosis of sacrifice in a marvellous self-realisation, which for the time seems complete, yet in course of time is realised to be short of completion. Will it ever be

complete? It is enough that it satisfies and inspires. To reach a passing satiety-point is a *pro tanto* completion, and more satisfying even than completion, for it foreshadows the imminence of a still deeper satisfaction, a still more wonderful, however fleeting, completion. It is a completion that leads on, that becomes as it were a point which shall expand again towards, fulfilling itself in, a mighty circumference. The brightest light is but the shadow of a still greater brilliance.

I have said that I feel I have to live in all three stages. I must not lose the stage before on entry into the stage beyond. The former must merge into the latter, for it must live to a twofold purpose—that there may be unity between me and those at that particular stage, and that God may fulfil in me His own Divinity. Nothing may be lost, nothing thrown away. There is nothing with which we have done away utterly and forever. There is nothing which is not the Life of God. I must be remembering these three stages, and must live in them all for service. I must be able to understand completely. More than ever before must I be one with all that is. No longer may I feel repulsion, or feel shocked. I must understand. The more I know of the Plan the more

I must realise how all fits into the Plan. So, beginning to live from the third stage, I must still be intensely alive in the other two, not fettered by them, but helping to lead others through them. To sense the marvels of Nirvanic consciousness is not to grow aloof from one's fellow-men, but to gain power to serve them and all other kingdoms more wisely and effectively.

I want to dwell at greater length upon the third stage—the stage of the dawning of the sun of righteousness. I have already described Nirvanic consciousness, which is included within this stage, as Light, with our Lord the Sun as the Universal Heart of Light as well as the physical Heart in a specific place. Yet if you dwelt mainly on the Light-idea, so that it dominated your conception, you would have only a very negative conception of Nirvanic consciousness, a very physical and limited conception. I use the word Light less to express the blinding glory (though this is marvellous enough) than to express an almost miraculous process of readjustment, an emergence of new values. Every expansion of consciousness involves a readjustment, at first overwhelmingly wonderful, stupendous, but later realised to need slow, steady, careful development—a

renewal of every single life-constituent in terms of the readjustment, so that the latter may be fulfilled and the way become ready for a further advance, a wider expansion of consciousness welling up from the depths of Reality. The opening of the doors of Buddhī into the Nirvanic consciousness is like the shaking of a kaleidoscope. The existing life-picture, and even the tiniest element contributing to its making, disappear, and a new life-picture is formed, perceived to be a partial apotheosis of its predecessor, another stage towards a picture still more perfect.

I perceive this Himalayan experience to be in the nature of a kind of magnetic bath, or readjustment process. Immersion in the Himalayan atmosphere—not merely the physical but also other atmospheres—is a baptism into Reality which can take place only in the Himalayas because of the physical conditions obtaining there. This baptism is not only a descent of power but a harmonisation of vehicles to the end that intercommunication may more readily take place. The physical body lying asleep at the Manor, Sydney, Australia is linked magnetically with Himalayan conditions, and becomes itself the plains of a microcosmic Himalayan range, of which

one of the peaks of consciousness is the Nirvanic. It is as if I had ascended a great mountain in this range of my Being, one of the lesser peaks no doubt, yet of mighty stature, towering far above all other summits I have so far gained. I perceive Mount Everest before me, but the summit on which I stand today was itself Mount Everest for me until I conquered it.

The very physical body now knows a new relationship with the subtler vehicles, has undergone a marked change, because communications have been made with consciousness-territory hitherto unexplored and out of reach. This densest body may be likened to the plains at the base of the Himalayas. At one stage, the dense mists of ignorance almost entirely separate it from all but the lowest hills in closest proximity. It seems to be a world in itself, self-contained, with just the slightest rising beyond. Slowly the mists recede, farther off a mightier upward sweep stands disclosed, and the plains beneath are seen to be but the lowest stages of a great landscape, drawing their life from heights above, some beginning to be known, others only surmised, some unknown. Still further recede the mists, clearing away, vanishing, and disclosing step by step loftier and loftier summits until the

whole Himalayan range stands revealed. The plains beneath are no longer a world in themselves, no longer a world with a range of hills beyond, no longer a part of a great landscape, but the base of a world towering into the sky, a base depending for its life upon that which comes from above. These plains are but the feet of the Himalayas. They live from the Himalayas. Their heart is in the Himalayas. Yet upon the Himalayas shines our Lord the Sun, in whom they live and move and have their being. Without Him, they, even they, would crumble into dust. Without Him, plains and mountain grandeurs would die and cease to be.

So is it with my body. It is but the base of my being. Elsewhere is my heart. Elsewhere is the Sun of my being. As I have ascended the Himalayas of the world, so am I ascending the Himalayas of my world, mighty peaks of which are the Buddhic and the Nirvanic consciousness. Do I still live in the plains of my physical body, or have I retired to my Himalayas? I cease to dwell in my lower bodies, in the lower ranges or on the plains. I have built myself a habitation on a mighty mountain-top. From there I live.

And yet, from another point of view, this very Himalayan experience or baptism enables

me to live more truly even on the lower ranges, even on the plains. A correlation has taken place. The plains and the lesser ranges have been united to the towering summits. The world of my being has been welded, united, into a mighty whole. I live everywhere in infinitely fuller measure, though my heart is in the Himalayas and in them do I renew my strength. On the lesser ranges, on the plains, I live in a world of reflections. I know them to be such, for I have seen the Substances they reflect, or at least the truer reflections. To those who see naught beyond the reflections, these are the substance and they live in them as such. But those of us who have travelled upward, inward, know them for what they are.

I can never forget the lesson of the Himalayas, even though to greater enlightenment the whole experience is but a symbol rather than a journey. It matters not. If it be but a symbol, it is the symbol of a journey. If it be a journey, the Himalayas remain the symbol of its travelling. I am living in new terms, in new similes if you will. I am linked to the Himalayas. For me they are a sacred range, portraying in rock, in earth, in grass, in shrubs, in flowers, in trees, in every part of both fauna and flora, as in a sculptured masterpiece, the

reality (and, within limits, the totality) of my being. Have I knocked at the door of the great Himalayan Brotherhood, a Brotherhood linked far more definitely to the very Himalayas themselves than would, to ordinary vision, seem possible? Microcosmically, I have conquered the Himalayas. Macrocosmically, I have but stepped on to their plains, their Outer Court; and now begins the great ascent to another spiritual Mount Everest. The Resurrection accomplished, now begins the pathway to the Ascension. Be all these things as they may, I am, I know, stamped with the seal of the Himalayas. Their life runs through my life. My life is absorbed in theirs. Surely am I linked with their spiritual counterparts, but it seems to me that the physical Himalayas overshadow me, guard me, guide me, uplift me. My physical body has become their child. Their spirit broods over it.

CHAPTER V

SOME REFLECTIONS

I AM not yet able to verify my surmise that in some definite way entry into Nirvanic consciousness modifies every lower vehicle from the Buddhist downwards; so that the very physical body itself is changed, and will become more so as time passes. It has, I imagine, been the same with all previous expansions of consciousness, for form is dependent upon consciousness. Outer forms are reflections, shadows, of inner realities. To us, density suggests permanence, durability, reality. From the inner standpoint, the greater the density the less the permanence, the less the durability, the less the reality. I feel my very physical body changed consequent upon this entry into a new realm of being, but I do not know how far others perceive the change, if change there is. I suppose a clairvoyant would perceive the readjustment. Life in all its details, on all planes, becomes much more wonderful, stupendous, majestic

beyond conception, for even the little things are perceived to be contributing to great ends. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground" has a new significance, for it is wonderfully true even as regards oneself.

I cannot walk in the garden, through the Australian bush on my way to work in town, without reading everything around me in terms of the Light I know. The growing grass, the trees swaying in the breeze, the birds singing in the air and flying from tree to tree, the insects crawling on the ground, the very earth I tread in all its varied forms of rock and mould, the water trickling down the hill-side, the very air I breathe; all is imprisoned splendour, sacred to every sense I possess. I am more in tune than ever before with the Purpose of Life. I see God working out His Purpose in all around me; and all around me is shining Light, restless, ordered growth-movement. Colour, form, place, storm, stillness, time—all are growth, because Light ever shines. It is the nature of Light to shine—a fact which down here people sometimes express in the phrase, the import of which is little apprehended—God is Love. God shines, for He is Light Ineffable.

I have said elsewhere that to preserve my

splendours I had to know that there was more beyond even these. I am now beginning to perceive that equally must I remember the existence of the less. Only thus shall a true balance be preserved. I must not ignore time because I know something of Eternity. I must not ignore the darkness because I know something of the Light. I must not ignore diversity because I know something of the Unity. I must not ignore man because I have learned something of God. I cannot, and do not, perceive the significance of Eternity, of Light, of Unity, of God, save as I work in their respective shadows of Time, of Darkness, of Diversity, of Man and of all that leads up to Man

Not that I feel more bound to specific growth. Were I treading the Pathway leading to the office of Manu, or of Bodhisattva, I should, I imagine, be coming infinitely closer to Races or to Faiths, to the world to which these Great Ones so specially belong. But because I belong to the Staff, I am called to more general functions. The opening of the Nirvanic consciousness seems to bring me closer both to the great Lord of our world Himself and to our Lord the Sun, the Lord of the Universe. Hitherto I have had to live in the world because

I have said above that we of the Staff live in the Will of the Lord ; but truly all live in the Will of the Lord. How can I then express the difference between one kind of living and another ? The only comparison I can make is with an army. There is the Commander-in-Chief. He has his Generals and his Staff, his officers and men. All live in the will of the Commander-in-Chief, for all are carrying out his will. But you will at once see the difference between the work of the Generals scattered over the area of the campaign and that of the Staff who go out from headquarters, convey the orders, carry out the specific duties entrusted to them, and then return. The Staff are the Commander's personal representatives ; the Generals are his agents. In some ways there is less responsibility upon the Staff than upon the Generals. The Generals are given an objective and possibly a general plan, but they must work out the scheme themselves. The work of the Staff is in some ways far more specific, but needs great adaptability ; a member of the Staff must be able to go anywhere and do, with reasonable efficiency, anything. Above all, he must live in great detachment from his work, while whole-heartedly doing it.

A most interesting revelation lies in the realisation of the way in which the great Company

of Servers,¹ from ourselves upwards, forms a wonderful centre of Light—one of the Suns of the world, of which our Lord the Sun is the heart. The Company of Servers, viewed in the deeper insight afforded me by this expansion of consciousness, becomes one unity through the ages. I do not know quite what language to use, but it is as if this Company might be likened to a film-roll—part in action on the screen, part completed, part yet to come. At any particular time, such and such members are active on the physical plane, others not thus engaged, yet active on other planes—and here is where the film simile fails, for from one point of view the whole Company is active all the time on one plane or another, to the common end.

There seems to be no particular past, present or future. There is as much future in the Company as present or past. It may be that some have yet to join its ranks. Yet they are already of the Company from a certain standpoint, and are borne upon its strength. There is, of course, variation in strength of functioning, but the Company of Servers is a type apart, to which Monads seem to be attached *ab initio*, however long it may take for the type to be expressed in the outer consciousness. It is a

¹ See Appendix D

matter of a kind of predestination, the Monad having taken the resolve.

This centre of Light—formed, as I have said, by the Company of Servers—is a process of expansion of world-consciousness. It is a world-chakram, growing in Light-intensity. It is not, of course, the only centre. There are many others, hidden as well as outer. Among the former is the true Rosicrucianism; among the latter the great centres of Light such as Adyar, Sydney, Ommen and Huizen, such as Ojai and Benares, and other centres of lesser Light-magnitude. Whenever such a centre comes into being, an expansion of world-consciousness takes place. It is as if the whole world were passing through some kind of initiation, and the world gains an added radiance, distinctly perceptible to inner sight.

Another fact of great significance is that to be a pupil of a Master, even to be a member of a Master's School of Training, involves a very beautiful partial identification with the Master's Light. From the very moment that an individual is connected with the Masters, His Light shines through him and in him. At Sonship the connection is made indissoluble, but even then the extent to which the connecting wires can bear the transmission depends upon

their strength and purity. There may be a feeble glow or a radiant brightness.

The Masters have explained to us that those of us with whom They have definite and special links are in a special measure not only Their representatives in the outer worlds, but also representatives of our Lord the Sun, consecrated to shine for Him and in His Brightness in the outer darkness. Surely this is a great and wonderful privilege for us, bearing a solemn and heart-searching responsibility all the more when we know in some slight degree Who and What He is. As He causes His Light to shine alike upon the just and upon the unjust, the saint and the sinner, the poor and the rich, the weak and the strong of all faiths and nations, so must the sunshine of our own power, compassion and understanding reflect His glory upon all. We must be all things to all men. We must be in the outer worlds a faint reflection of that which makes Nirvana so glorious a witness to the Love of God. As the Sun is all things to His universe, so must we be suns to ours.

Let those who know something of the great Hierarchy strive to understand more clearly what that Hierarchy is, and of Whom it is composed. Let each member of the Society meditate upon these greater Suns in the

firmament of the world, unifying himself to the utmost of his power with Their Radiance. Let each member feel this Radiance surging through him to the outer world, lifting him into a divine ecstasy as it floods his being.

Let us learn to reflect, as occasion demands, the varied glories of the Seven Rays. The members of Their Staff of workers must be able, no matter to what Ray they may individually belong, to become channels for any colour in the great Spectrum of the Rays. We must sense their respective variations on the theme of the Light-Splendid, and in the thrill of our response realise how glowing must be the life which we should radiate into the world.

Every teacher, whoever and wherever he may be, simply because he is a teacher, becomes in some degree an image of those who serve the Teaching Ray, though too often this image is distorted and barely recognisable, sometimes even worse than a distortion. As every Christian priest is a humble representative of the Christ, so is every teacher a humble representative of one of the Great Heads of the Teaching Department of the world. This privilege is his because of his office, and apart from all question of his worthiness. To be a teacher is to be a representative of the Great Teachers. The

responsibility cannot be escaped any more than the privilege.

The same principle holds good in all departments. Those who rule, the statesmen, the politicians, all engaged in statecraft, are humble representatives—worthy or unworthy—of the Great Rulers. They may desecrate and degrade the office; yet the office remains, however besmirched. The same principle holds good in all subdivisions of departments. All this is in compliance with, in expression of, the great Unity of all Life.

One thus becomes able to see the Real in everyone, however much the unreal may interpose. One perceives the Truth despite the camouflage. Every teacher, by virtue of his office, is a Christ in miniature; but O, how little most of them realise their possibilities and responsibilities! Many teachers are careless and perfunctory, many are incredibly cruel; yet upon each of them, as a teacher, the Christ-Light beats, however blankly unaware of it he may be, however little it may shine through. He is part, for the time being at all events, of the heavenly Teacher, the embodiment of the Teaching Principle in life.

Applying this fact within a more circumscribed area, we realise that those who are

members of a Church dedicated to some special Teacher are part of his body corporate, and thus partake of his essential nature. For example, those who are in communion, through the dedication of their church, with St. Alban, are thereby linked to him, become members of his family and may draw upon his life. He is the father of that Church-family. It becomes very much worth while, therefore, to acquire all available authentic information about St. Alban, his lives, his line of work, his special characteristics, and so on. As members of his Church it becomes easier for us to contact him, and to develop in our own natures the glorious qualities existing in his. There is very much more in the dedication of a Church to a Saint than appears at first sight. There is also very much more than appears at first sight in becoming a teacher or a politician, in taking an office of whatever kind which involves responsibility to the outer world. And not only is the link made with an Elder Brother, it is also made with his angels, and with all other grades attached to the same department. Even Mother Earth herself contributes power according to the nature of the channel which draws it. Interrelationship, interaction, everywhere. Our very existence modifies the world, and qualifies it according to our natures.

CHAPTER VI

THE AWAKENING OF NIRVANA

Day !
Faster and more fast ,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last
Boils pure gold o'er the cloud-cup's brim,
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid grey
Of the Eastern cloud, an hour away :
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed
the world

BROWNING.

TRYING to describe what I must call down here the Nirvanic body, the only word that comes to me in substitution for "body" is radiance. I am radiance One might describe the Buddhic body as a Star raying forth its glories. But transition to Nirvana seems to spread my Star out so that there is neither centre nor circumference, but only dazzling radiance. If I could look upon this brilliance from some

para-Nirvanic region I should be able to discern its limitation, not so much a spatial restriction, as a limitation in the radiance-scheme and the radiance-intensity. This lustre of mine, indescribably glorious though it is, is obviously only in the becoming, and when I compare it with the radiance of my seniors I perceive, first, that in it the Nirvanic Light is only in embryonic co-ordination, in what I may call rough outline; and second, that the very Light itself, dazzling though it be, lacks the scintillation which time and growth alone can give. I notice that those who are Masters in these Nirvanic regions, and have fulfilled its seven great fields or planes, shine with the glories of still greater splendours, their Nirvanic radiances being suffused, interpenetrated with higher effulgences which I can sense but shall take long ages to achieve

In some ways, from the standpoint of the lower planes, the word transcendence is more appropriate even than radiance, for it indicates the going beyond every single limitation worn by the planes beneath. Time, space, form—these are transcended. They have ceased to manifest, though remaining in potentiality, or I could not assume them as I descend, as I pass outwards. I am well aware that such transcendence suggests an annihilation of all that

on the lower planes seems to make life real—the ego, the personality, the individuality. If all these are gone, what remains? Is Nirvana, after all, the annihilation which some philosophers have thought it to be?

My answer is that all these things, however substantial they may appear down here, however much they may seem to be our ultimate foundation, are themselves but reflections of nobler substance, themselves rest on deeper foundations still. Individualised Divinity exists in Nirvana, and doubtless in para-Nirvana, too, even though its reflections as time, space, form and as the lower individualisations we know as ego, personality and individuality, are unmanifest, potential. We have to learn that individualisation does not necessarily demand description in terms of time and space and form as we know these in the outer worlds. There is individualisation in other terms, in terms of Nirvanic time, Nirvanic space, Nirvanic form—the archetypes of lower time, lower space, lower form.

I may go even further and say that, as the physical plane is to the subtler planes above, so is the Nirvanic plane to the planes above it. It must surely be the densest region of the series of regions that stretch beyond it. Even I can

perceive that the lowest sub-plane of Nirvana is dense (inappropriate as the adjective seems in reference to Light) as compared with the higher sub-planes. I can only repeat that individualised Divinity exists as definitely in Nirvana as, indeed more definitely in Nirvana than, it does down here. When we transcend *our* time, *our* form, we do not subtract, we add.

It is as if an individual living in a small cottage were to become the king of his country. While the cottage remains his world, kingship would seem a limitation. He would be lost in it. But when he is ready for kingship, when he has ceased to be his cottage and only uses it, then he loses nothing by becoming king, even though the cottage-time, the cottage-space and the cottage-form may have been transcended. He can even live in the cottage if he so desires, at all events from time to time, but he is no longer limited by it. Has he lost his individuality by becoming a king? The difference between the kingly individuality and the cottage individuality is as the difference between individuality in Nirvana and individuality on the physical plane. Becoming king he has added to himself, however much the cottage may have been subtracted. To the cottager there is a subtraction; to the king there is addition.

Let us follow for a moment this simile of the king. Consider the difference between the king and the cottager—the greater power of the king, his greater splendour, his wider vision, his deeper understanding. The king lives in a time and space and form different from those of the cottager. He can do far more in his time. His time is fuller, more potent. His area of movement is far wider. He contacts so much of which the cottager remains necessarily ignorant. His form is so different from that of the cottager. He has many forms, he has to be many things to many people, he has many functions in his state, all depending upon his kingship. Many things he does which the cottager does. He eats, drinks, sleeps, works. But he does all these things differently, and to greater ends. The cottager may live to eat, but the true king eats to live. The king lives in another world, though both he and the cottager may be in the same world. One set of values and standards for the king; another set, even with regard to the same things, for the cottager. The things precious to the cottager may have little value to the king, just as the things which the king cherishes may mean nothing to the cottager. The cottager looks upon the world with a cottager's eyes. The king looks upon

the world with the eyes of a king. The cottager, as the poets so often tell us, would not exchange his lot with that of kings, because he would not be able to be happy in the wider sphere—he knows but limited happiness. But the king—the true king—would have little hesitation in exchanging his lot with that of the cottager, because he could be as kingly in the cottage as in the palace, as kingly in the cottage-state as in the Nation-State over which he rules. The greater can limit itself far more easily than the less can expand. The king can be kingly anywhere, and that is all that matters to him. He depends upon himself. The cottager depends upon his world.

I should like at this point to emphasise the fact that on entering Nirvana we absorb it far more than Nirvana absorbs us. It might be thought that, once bathed in the glories of Nirvana, an individual would practically become its slave, leaving it with difficulty, effecting a veritable annihilation of the lower worlds so far as regards any joy of living in them. It might be thought that he would become Nirvana-absorbed, ever longing for its bliss, never happy until and unless immersed in it. My own experience is different. It may, of course, be that as I become more familiar with

Nirvana I shall become more absorbed in it. Yet from the very beginning of contact with Nirvanic consciousness there has been an overwhelming eagerness to convey something of its reality to the worlds in which I have grown so long. To contact Nirvana is like a debtor suddenly finding himself with unexpected means to liquidate some of his debts to his creditors. We owe much to the outer world. We have lived in it for ages. We have grown in it. However much we transcend it we still remain its debtors. We may not kick from under us the ladder by which we have risen.

God Himself is paying his debts of long ago in the Divinity-infused systems and universes of which we are part. Is it irreverent to say that through these very payments He Himself grows, as we grow through ours? Indeed, it is only as we are prepared to pay that the wherewithal comes to us for payment. I could not contact Buddhi save as I am seen to be realising my true relationships in the lower worlds. I could not transcend Buddhi save as I am seen to be dedicating the power of Buddhi as I have already been dedicating the powers below. No transcendence of the lower is possible save as it becomes consecrated again by us to the ends to which God

consecrated it aforetime. We must remember His consecration of matter to a Divine unfoldment or apotheosis. We must transubstantiate, even as He is ever transubstantiating: which, put in simple language, means that we must live in terms of Brotherhood. Brotherhood must be substituted for the smaller self.

My longing, therefore, is not to keep Nirvana to myself, not to obliterate external surroundings, but to carry Nirvana everywhere, no matter where. I could not dare to enter Nirvana otherwise, or I truly believe I should indeed experience some form of annihilation. Its Light would burn me up. Only can I enter Nirvana as I am ready to recognise Nirvana, and as Nirvana is ready to recognise me. In other words, I must bring it of its own. There must be in me the dawning of the essential Nature of Nirvana, which is not annihilation, but an infinitely deeper radiance, an infinitely deeper wisdom, power, love. Hence, given such dawning, safely may I enter, for I shall be entering only to live more abundantly.

Nirvana has been born in me. It is a condition of consciousness. I cannot express Nirvana in aught that is less than Nirvana, but I can suggest it, I can remould forms into closer approximation to its formless majesty. I can

remember Nirvana, and I can live my daily life as unto Nirvana, pointing to Nirvana. And this is what I must do, for I can only know Nirvana myself as I lead others towards it. But when I say I must lead others to it, I ought to make it clear that Nirvana is already in them. Nirvana is not somewhere in space. It is a state of our consciousness, of the consciousness in every individual. What I have set forth in these pages is waiting to be set forth, either in similar or in other terms, by all. Time is, of course, needed. The seed does not become the bud at once. But it is only time that is needed. A short time for the wise, a long time for the ignorant; a short time for those in whom the sense of the Unity of Life is growing strong, a long time for those who have still to learn many lessons in the outer world.

Let none, however, imagine that in any sense perfection is needed for entry into Nirvana. It is not a state of perfection. I am able to reach its lowest stages even though there are still many fetters which bind me to the human kingdom. It is a state of being, and all states of being, since they are limitations of the One, must necessarily be imperfect, partial. That it is a state nearer perfection than all lower conditions of consciousness is, of course, obvious. That there

is greater unfoldment in it is true. It is a condition of indescribable bliss and power. But it is by no means the ultimate, and he who reaches it has not long left the preparatory school of life.

At the first of the Great Initiations he finally completed these earlier stages, and now at the fourth great step he is equipped, with the aid of the powers of the second and third steps, for more serious service, for real leadership in the outer world. He enters Nirvana with fetters still about him—still with certain limitations and weaknesses, incompletions. Side by side, if I may use the expression, there dwell together the Nirvanic consciousness and all the other modes of consciousness of his being. The lower modes thus tend to disappear, for his attention is towards the Light. He loses interest in these lower modes, and takes up his abode in the higher. No longer fed with attention and interest, at last these lower ranges die, and as they die higher and higher does the gradually liberated individual climb, sub-plane after sub-plane, in the kingdom of Nirvana. Little by little this consciousness, itself unfolding, transmutes all lower forms, till at last the individual's waking consciousness is an unfolded Nirvana, and all other modes only

spring into being as from time to time they happen to be needed. This, and perhaps much more than this, is the normal life of the Masters of the Wisdom.

CHAPTER VII

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

I SEEM to have seen as in a flash a picture of the future of our Theosophical Society. In my higher bodies I am sure I know not only its general future but many of the details. But I find it extraordinarily difficult to hold the picture in the waking consciousness. I presume the reason for this is that the picture I have seen is the expression of the Will of God, of the Logos, in this particular connection, is a flash of Lightning-standing-still, and almost defies translation through a brain unaccustomed to such transmission. The Nirvanic wave-length is almost too subtle for my brain machine, and most is lost in the process of transmission.

I see the Society in terms of the Eternal Now as a certain Light-quality, this Light-quality being independent of the existence of the Society since the Society is only the Light in a particular mode of manifestation. The Society is the expression of a great Light movement—

with no beginning so far as I could see, and no end. I see this movement as I see the light-houses of Sydney Harbour, now shining in the outer world, now not shining; and you will realise my difficulty in holding the picture in the physical consciousness inasmuch as the various periods of manifestation of the Theosophical movement in the outer world are visualised as one sees the flashings of a light-house which sends out periodic beams of light. I see many such flashes, presumably occurring at the close of each century, temporarily illuminating the darkened world; and between each a period of darkness. Thus the first impression down here is darkness—light—darkness—light—darkness—light, with the darkness wonderfully, though very gradually, shading into the dawning of a Day of the Lord, upon the threshold of which stands the world at the present time

Can I dissect this flash, analyse it? Only very generally, with my feeble powers. I seem to see the Theosophical Society move more and more in the direction of concentrating its efforts upon the insistence of goodwill in every department of life. The first Object remains the vital Object. The second and third Objects remain an integral part of the Society's official

principles, but the second Object seems to have to a certain extent fulfilled itself, while the third forms the special objective of the E.S.T. The E.S.T. is, of course, in fact the heart of the Society, for it is the link between the Society and the Great White Lodge, but it seems to become a more homogeneous activity even than at present, having its separate head and organisation, though working in closest harmony with the Society itself. The E S T. is the school for discipleship, while the Theosophical Society has become far more part of the outer world in the sense that its members are engaged in active work in every field of life, some working in one way, others in other ways, perhaps opposed ways—but all maintaining in splendid comradeship the binding Unity above the most conflicting diversities. Members of the Society are noted for their enlightened citizenship, and their utterances are heard with respect, because it is known that they are both selfless and wise. They are the world's insurance against wars and quarrels of all kinds. Every member, wherever he may be, is an accredited ambassador from the Prince of Peace to his surroundings, and has the respect due to a wise elder. The more members of the Society begin to take an active part in the world's

affairs, the more are people attracted to its membership who themselves are active; with the result that the Society becomes a picked body of idealistic, practical, efficient pioneers who get things done because they really mean business. Through the efforts of members many superstitions die, though some die a lingering death. The superstitions of meat-eating, and wine and spirit-drinking die. The superstition of racial superiority dies. The superstition of class or sect irreconcilability dies. And the new policy is a policy of intensifying capacity rather than of levelling differences, it being held that the differences will harmonise themselves if capacity is encouraged and directed to unselfish ends. Little by little the whole world commits itself to brotherhood, and the Theosophical Society, still existing, becomes a great world-wide organisation supplying every brotherhood movement, every nation, every faith, with its leaders and most stalwart protagonists. The common membership of them all within the Theosophical Society is the world's guarantee against disharmony and conflicting aims.

I do not see most of us in all this. We have done our work. We belong ever to minorities and to beginnings, to experiments, to forlorn

hopes, to unexplored forests, to uncharted seas. We have made these things possible, and this is what we had to do. Some of us are in the Great Community. Others are engaged in other duties in this and in other worlds. Thus other people have taken our places in the Theosophical Society, or at least the places of many of us, and the Society at this period represents the world's acknowledged best. I think some former Presidents are in turn Presidents of the Society, thus preserving the hierarchical and apostolic succession, but the majority of the members are people who today are not quite ready to join

The difficulty in seeing all this lies in the fact that the whole impression is one single impact, and this impact has to be dissected. For example, I seem to contact an impression of the Presidents of the Society from the beginning up to the period I am describing. But I can only get quite vague impressions as to who they are. There seems to be a kind of President-Man just as we speak of the Heavenly Man. The Presidents together constitute a special type of force, and each individual President takes office because he or she brings the particular quality of power needed at the moment. The choice of President is quite a complicated scientific affair,

involving the manipulating of many forces ; so, too, is the choice of Vice-President. The Society has as far as possible to reflect the Great White Lodge in the outer world, and its chief officials play an important rôle in such reflection.

I see the Society as the Light-Nucleus of the forces radiating from it to energise Brotherhood-activity throughout the world and on many planes. The Society is a direct channel for the Power of the Great White Lodge, in many ways the most direct channel, but the Power of the Lodge flows through the Society into many brotherhood movements. The Society is the heart of them all, and the inspirer of most, whether they recognise the fact or not.

I see in the picture our Society leading the way to Brotherhood more and more directly. The Society begins to become an acknowledged power in politics, in religion, in education, in industry, in social life generally. More and more, members of the Theosophical Society take practical and active part in the world's affairs, and as time passes some of them occupy prominent and responsible positions. The Society stands behind Brotherhood in all phases of life, and while it is not committed to any special form of activity or belief, and there are members belonging to various kinds of organisations and

modes of thought, still the common membership causes a strong comradeship even amidst diverse and antagonistic activity, so that members of the Society are always able to bring together opposing factions when the opposition becomes injurious to the community as a whole.

Lodges of the Theosophical Society tend to become Community centres, self-contained, on the outskirts of towns, but with centres of activity within the towns.¹ In this way, the various Lodges become practical examples of Brotherhood, which the world admires, thus causing a great increase in membership. The members begin to become the Society's best advertisement—which all are not today—and the outer world, for this very reason, gravitates towards hygienic and humane living. As I have already written, meat-eating, "sport" of the kind in vogue today, vivisection, industrial quarrelling, religious antagonisms, international disputes—all tend to disappear, partly because of the direct activity of members of the Society, partly because of the indirect example of community living, and partly because the Society becomes a very potent network of Brotherhood, out of which the world is at last unable to escape. The members of the Society

¹ See Appendix E for a more detailed description

become efficient sentinels against anarchy, revolution and all other forms of destructive unrest.

I see the Society being led into closer contact with the outer world, and fine egos born within its ranks, attracted thereto by the immense possibilities which membership of the Society offers. Membership of the Society becomes much more valuable and valued than ever before. It confers a distinct *cachet*, and egos with a purpose realise that both educationally and as regards a starting-point for the delivery of their message, to grow up within the Society's influence is a very great asset. There seems to be almost a rush to be born of members of the Society, especially with the wonderful ideal of Motherhood which the Society does so much to foster.

I see the subsidiary activities very virile, very vigorous, definitely subsidiary in the sense of paying reverent homage to the Mother-movement, yet sturdily independent at the same time, and contributing to world-progress a vitality all their own. Interestingly enough, I see all these things in terms of colour.

Liberalising and unifying movements are at work in every religion, through the instrumentality of the Theosophical Society, and I

see other movements in other faiths taking their place side by side with the Liberal Catholic Church and the Hindu movement—both very powerful organisations—within a great League of Religions, an activity different, it seems, from the World-Religion.

CHAPTER VIII

THE IMMANENCE OF LIGHT

Paris, March 7th It was dark and rather cold, I was gloomy and walked because I had nothing to do. I passed by some flowers placed breast-high upon a wall. A jonquil in bloom was there. It is the strongest expression of desire: it was the first perfume of the year. I felt all the happiness destined for man. This unutterable harmony of souls, the phantom of the ideal world, arose in me complete. I never felt anything so great or so instantaneous. I know not what shape, what analogy, what secret of relation it was that made me see in this flower a limitless beauty . . . I shall never enclose in a conception this power, this immensity that nothing will express; this form that nothing will contain; this ideal of a better world which one feels, but which it would seem that nature has not made.

De Sénancour.

It is an interesting experiment to look out of the window upon the scene without and gradually to withdraw from each object seen the various associations with it on different planes. Things are, apart from that which they appear to be. Every object I perceive has a being

different from my conception of it. It is all I think it to be, or it may be less than I think it to be, in so far as I attribute to it that which in reality it does not possess (to this extent I am very truly misunderstanding it); but it is also far more, for it represents a principle of life, a law of evolution, the nature of which, at my particular level, I can only very partially grasp.

As I look out of my window upon Sydney Harbour, or upon a certain portion of it, withdrawing my habitual associations, the first thing that strikes me is the unity of it all. Everything belongs to everything. Everything needs everything else, is the comrade of everything else. I see that part of the harbour which is open to my gaze as a tender whole, almost crying out against the vandalism of man which would resolve it into independent, unrelated, antagonistic elements. Why should everything live against each other when in fact everything lives upon each other? I perceive everything as helping to fulfil everything, as contributing towards the purposefulness of everything.

The vessel on the sea helps to fulfil the sea, and the sea helps to fulfil the vessel. The houses dotted upon the slopes help to fulfil the

land on which they are builded, just as the land helps the houses to fulfil themselves. The tiniest pebble resting upon the beach is necessary to the beach, is necessary to the mighty sea which seems to treat it so haughtily, so cavalierly. How could the earth grow without its earth-worms, its vegetation, the creatures that live upon it? How could all these grow save with the co-operation of the earth? I perceive entities everywhere, living entities, with more or less consciousness. The ships, the houses, the trees and shrubs and flowers, the very pebbles—all are entities. The whole harbour is one great being, yet various parts of the harbour are beings too.

I see all in these terms, each entity with its own small life, yet enfolded in the one Life Universal, a part of the one Great Whole, each dependent upon all the rest. I see each helping to fulfil the others. But at this word "fulfil" I am stopped, and I am told to notice that these various things do not by any means always fulfil each other, though they ought to. Sometimes they profane and degrade each other, as, for example, when an ugly building is put up, when the open spaces are desecrated by hideous erections of any kind or by the loathsome litter of man's careless selfishness.

Whenever and wherever one part lives ruthlessly at the expense of another, then there is no fulfilment, but rather a debasement in which all, by very reason of the enfolding unity, must needs share. I find that I begin to grow sensitive to these defilements. They jar me and hurt me, for I know how glorious a thing is that mother-Unity to which they are so unfilial.

Now all this is consequent upon the withdrawal of all lower associations and the substitution of Buddhi, a veritable transubstantiation. But I think I can go a step further and view my landscape in terms of Nirvanic consciousness. At the Buddhist level it is the marvellous interrelation that strikes me. Let me blot out this sense of interrelation and seek still further within. I make what is to me a most interesting discovery. Expecting to perceive everything in terms of light, I find that everything resolves itself into power-units. I perceive the power in everything, and am almost appalled by it. I hardly notice the forms. These do not seem to matter at all. They are trivial compared with the ensouling power. And then I suddenly begin to notice that this power is imprisoned Light.

Here I must use a phrase which I hope is intelligible—it is the only phrase I can find:

Light unconscious is veiled in matter that it may become Light self-conscious; and the power I so strongly perceive is the irresistible potentiality of the Light self-conscious within the Light unconscious. Power and Light are, therefore, one and the same thing; but the transubstantiation from Buddhic to Nirvanic consciousness seemed to emphasise Light as Power, perhaps because the first thing I noticed was the splendour of Light slowly but surely transcending its imprisonment in all things. I saw victory everywhere, everywhere the Light unconscious growing into its self-consciousness in those stages of intensification which we call kingdoms of nature.

Perceiving these rays of Light-Power in all things, I notice a great harmony-in-the-becoming. At the Buddhic level of interpretation I should have described this harmony in terms of sound-music, each object contributing its lesser harmony of sound. At the Nirvanic level of interpretation, I describe this harmony in terms of light-music, each object contributing its lesser harmony of light. At all levels of interpretation one notices, of course, the growing harmony—not yet without marring discords, I fear. But at the Buddhic and Nirvanic levels, the harmonies are infinitely deeper—in the one

case the underlying unity being disclosed, while in the other the power that makes for unity is opened to our gaze. Below the Buddhist level it would seem as if the harmonies were of colour and of form, though everywhere there is light, and everywhere there is sound. I feel able to say, then, that as I look out of my window I perceive imprisoned within every single object in every kingdom of nature the unity of Buddhi, the power of Nirvana, however embryonic and unconscious. The one Life, with all constituent elements, pervades all things, and there is no region, however lofty, but has its reflection in all things.

There is nothing which is not Divine. We tread Divinity when we tread the earth. Whatever we touch, whatever we see, whatever we hear, whatever we feel—all is Divinity. My landscape, therefore, is renewed. Every object of which it is composed reveals a hitherto hidden Divinity, and hence has new and richer values. These objects, the ships, the little boats, the ferry-steamers, the buildings, the lamp-posts, the shops and the objects for sale in them, the trees and flowers, the furniture in the rooms—all are now instinct with new meaning, and therefore with new purpose, with new inter-relationships. In each there is much more

relativity and less individuality than before, and, what is more, I seem able more definitely to discern the extent to which each reproduces or distorts its archetype, for there is nothing without archetype.

It may be that in terms of eternity there is no distortion ; but in terms of time there often is, and we have the task of readjusting the distortions which are noticeable from the point of view of the time-world. Hence I am now more able to judge what is out of harmony, what is harmonious. Each object is a personalisation of Light-Sound, the personalisation being the translation of Light-Sound in our lower worlds. Each object is a sun in humblest miniature, a tiny star. Each object is a microscopic harmony. But each object, too, may have its elements of darkness and of discord, where its true light- and sound-values are thwarted. It is interesting to me to listen to objects and to endeavour to sense their respective Light-terms. I am just at the beginning of this, and can at present say no more.

I suddenly realise (1) that the Nirvana I am beginning to know at the fringe, is itself not merely a reflection of para-Nirvana, whatever para-Nirvana may be, but also a reflection of a cosmic Nirvana, of which it is the direct

representation; (2) that this very Nirvana is the reincarnation of the Nirvana realised by our Lord the Sun on His own upward Path in a period prior to the being of our system. I realise that every plane has its cosmic archetype or counterpart.

I realise, too, that every plane is an externalisation of a potentiality which itself is the fruit of experience and consummation. Our own contacts—in whatever manner—with the various planes of nature are not merely for our personal growth, but that in a future beyond time there may be in us the potentialities of a Universe, that as our Lord the Sun is to His, to all His kingdoms, so may we become to ours. Having become centres or radiances or transcendences, having breathed in, after the great outbreathing, there may take place once more an outbreathing to circumferences, or in other words, a manifestation. As our Lord the Sun breathes, in mighty life-giving breaths, so shall we. Such seems to be the law of all being, at least of all which we can conceive, for to us being is pulsation. It may be that there is being destitute of this quality, but this does not seem to be the case in the schemes we know, though we naturally postulate unmanifestation as an apotheosis of inbreathing and call it pure being,

still, ourselves manifest, we cannot conceive of the unmanifest without the potentiality, the seed, of manifestation. We therefore postulate great in- and outbreathing, and while the attainment of self-conscious Divinity may be the apotheosis of inbreathing we look for a succeeding outbreathing, as night follows day.

Having in my own nature effected a transubstantiation of consciousness, the Nirvanic consciousness being now my positive "substans", instead of negative as hitherto, I proceed to follow up the process by an endeavour in the direction of effecting a similar transubstantiation in regard to the outer world. I say "an endeavour," for it is just the halting and feeble beginning of a wonderful transformation leading to the consciousness of the Adept. First, I obtain a general impression of the world viewed Nirvanically, and immediately all ugliness disappears—the pathway merges in the goal, processes are perceived in terms of their results. As a general statement, I might say that Nirvana is a consummation, an apotheosis, an archetype, of world conditions. It sounds strange, perhaps, to bring into juxtaposition the words "consummation" and "archetype," and yet Nirvana is both. It is both seed and flower—seed in all things, flower in a few.

In the outer world I am living amid innumerable conditions, circumstances and events. I draw my outer world into Nirvana—somehow I seem able to do this—and I perceive the Real. The Real-in-the-becoming, which is the outer world, has become the Real, for I have touched it with the magic of the Eternal Now which is the Time of Nirvana. Immediately I perceive a new significance to the phrase: "God is Love." He is infinitely more than Love. He is ourselves. And every circumstance of the world in every kingdom and on every plane is a fulfilling of God, however we define this word, an unfoldment of Himself, of His Nature. We are of His very Substance, and the Holy Eucharist, whether in Christianity or in any other Faith, is a veritable remembrance of this supreme Truth, a sounding of its ineffable Note amidst the discords of growth and becoming.

I substitute God for all that is less than God, and the world stands self-explained and justified. I have found God in everything. Nothing is there which is Godless, nothing which is not Godlike. I can conceive an entirely different system of evolution in the course of which growth takes place without friction, without the swinging process, if I may so call it, between the innumerable pairs of opposites—

good and evil, right and wrong, and so forth. But I realise that the methods and processes enjoined for our own particular evolution are perfectly adapted to such ends as I am able to grasp. Whether they are the shortest possible cut to these ends I do not know. One presumes that what is best has been chosen, and it is futile, not to say presumptuous, to speculate further.

When I am able to say, not merely as a pious belief or hope or yearning, but as an experience, that God is Love, I have effected a transubstantiation, that is to say, I have emphasised Reality. The world thus becomes far more real in every circumstance of its being. Essentially, of course, all is real, for all is God. But there are, if I may say so, gradations of God, from the unconscious to the self-conscious. The transubstantiation I effect is to substitute self-consciousness for unconsciousness, or, to put the process another way, to assert the self-conscious in the unconscious. I realise here how useless words and phrases are, for in the Light of Nirvana there seems to be no difference between the two. But if I have to try to explain out here, I can only say I assert the Real in the midst of the unreal, or I know the unreal as the Real.

Hence, Nirvana interprets ; in the dark places shines its Light. Elsewhere I have written of the new values Nirvana gives to things, of the readjustment Nirvana effects. Let me here put this fact in another way. I am beginning to live in a new world which is nothing more than the old world "real-ised". I am beginning to "real-ise" everything, so that nothing seems out of place. Everything seems inevitable—gloriously inevitable. I have used that phrase before with regard to the future, but it is equally true of the present ; and we cannot do without a single circumstance of it

I feel that this must sound very strange in view of the terrible condition in which the the world finds itself today. Yet nothing is terrible unless we linger when we should proceed. Nothing is terrible until we cling to it long after it has served its purpose. Nothing is wrong until we have outgrown it. Evil is but a worn-out garment we still wear, and it is worth while to remember that what one has done with and should cast off may well be a new suit of clothes for another. In world-terms, Truth grows, however much there may be Truth absolute and eternal, and we must grow with Truth. Truth unfolds, and we must unfold with Truth. We cannot, must not, wait. We must

not be sluggards. To stagnate is to decay, and the only really terrible thing in the world is the decay which is stopping still, for that is the beginning of falling back. Other decay of a noble kind, there is, which is but the reverent putting aside of that which has served its purpose. It is the former which is dangerous; against it the whole world must be on guard, lest it repeat the bitter experience of the past.

In the light of the Nirvanic consciousness I perceive, as I have said, the Real in all things. The changing world has become a world changed; and I know that nowhere is any waiting inevitable. There is nothing so hardened that it can no longer move. Strange as the statement may sound, the great war itself helped to loosen the hardnesses, though I am not prepared to say that they could not possibly have been relieved in any other way. In any case, the very Coming of the World-Teacher is proof that the world has the ears to hear Him. Does not His moving among mankind effect a transubstantiation for the whole world? A marvellous tangible Real will thus be substituted for the infinitely lesser Reals with which the world has for so long had to be contented. He takes their place. The very writing of this phrase thrills me, for it embodies the

wonderful fact that He re-enters into an intimate relationship with us. He comes down among us, entering into our little world, taking His place *in* us, substituting Himself for our own higher selves, which is the same thing as saying that He raises us far beyond our normal selves, or that He purifies our higher selves and draws the lower into accord with the higher. In the Light of Nirvana I see how all this is brought about, for He is embodied Nirvana, a Nirvana which the world shall be allowed to see and hear and know

For all things I perceive the Nirvanic counterpart, but this perception has more meaning today than it has had for many centuries. The world is about to enter upon a new spring-time. Already I perceive the tiny shoots of Buddhi forcing their way through the denser layers of the lower planes, and, looking forward into the far distance, I see how these little shoots shall become buds, finally blossoming into the Buddhic flower. We must water these shoots by treading the Path of Righteousness, or they will decay back into unconsciousness.

Nirvana shows me, as I have never seen before, the potentialities within the actualities of these worlds of ours. I know what the world can do. But the world must not wait. It must

move, and all men and women of goodwill must help it to move. Utopia is waiting to enter, but the world must open its doors; and I am utterly clear that there is nothing in the world which is an insuperable barrier to this opening. I seem to observe the world as from a great height. Its need is very great. It cries aloud for help—the cry that the Lord has heard and answers with the words: “I come.” I see good promise for the future, if only the world’s leaders will lead it from the pursuit of separateness, whether individual, or class, or nation, or sect, or race, to the pursuit of Unity and Understanding.

Nirvana is not yet for the world, but the Sun of Buddhi should not be so very far below the horizon, and already the roseate colours of its dawning should begin to dispel the night of separateness. Have you ever stood upon a mountain watching before dawn for the rise upon the world of our Lord the Sun? Have you stood awestruck at the miracle of a world of darkness being transmuted into a world of softest colour? Have you marvelled at the glory disclosed in every part of the landscape by the magic touch of the Sun’s rays? Have you noticed how beautiful is the re-awakening of everything into life? Have you watched the

glorious innocence and yearning of all that is, in its dawning? The great English Mystic, Thomas Traherne, gives beautiful expression to the dawning of childhood on the physical plane; almost similar words might be used for childhood on any other plane, for the first awakening of higher consciousness. Traherne tells us :

Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world, than I when I was a child. All appeared new, and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful. I was a little stranger which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. My knowledge was Divine. My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the Estate of Innocence. All things were spotless and pure and glorious, yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I knew not that there were any sins, or complaints or laws. I dreamed not of poverties, contentions or vices. All tears and quarrels were hidden from mine eyes. Everything was at rest, free and immortal. I knew nothing of sickness or death or rents or exaction, either for tribute or bread. In the absence of these I was entertained like an Angel with the works of God in their splendour and glory, I saw all the peace of Eden, Heaven and Earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam, than to me. All time was Eternity, and a perpetual Sabbath. Is it not strange, that an infant should be heir of the whole World, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold?

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold, the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged men seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and the maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared, which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine, and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the dirty devices of this world. Which now I unlearn, and become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of God.

Is it not at the dawn that we perceive the beauty even in the things that otherwise we should call ugly?

So have I stood upon the mountain of Nirvana. So stand I still, and watch the world once more stirring into Buddhi as the Lord Christ dawns again upon it. Only stirring, perhaps. How long before the awakening? Ah! Who can tell. Yet we may be thankful that dull sleep has given way to dreaming, and that out of that comes a stirring upon the threshold of awakening. I see, of course, that this is not the first of such. Many Suns have dawned upon us, and step by step the world has grown. There have been the greater and more glorious dawns, as when Great Saviours have illumined us. There have been the lesser stirrings, as in the periods of renaissance, as towards the close of every century since the twelfth.

This brings me to a further perception of the Theosophical Society as one of these mighty stirrings which the Saviours alone can give. I see the Theosophical Society as the living witness of that Buddhist consciousness which the world has yet to know, but towards which, in part consciously, yet for the most part unconsciously, it yearns. The Society is, as it were, the touchstone and nucleus of Buddhi in the outer world, reflecting Buddhi or Brotherhood, pointing the way to Brotherhood

in its three great Objects, awakening Brotherhood in the world in innumerable forms, subsidiary to the supreme archetype as disclosed in the first Object. Those who are beginning to be ready for Buddhî inevitably turn towards the Society as its physical plane symbol and expression. Their faces are turned towards the dawning; in the Theosophical Society they find its Herald, and they add their voices to the Voice of the Dawn calling the world to awaken to a newer day.

I perceive the Society itself to be an Himalayan range, with its peopled plains in the outer world, with the lesser hills of the Esoteric School, and with the ascending peaks and ranges of discipleship culminating in those Lofty Supermen who constitute its inner Light and Life. I see what the Society has to become—a channel for Buddhî, for the Buddhistic consciousness to the outer world. I see that while the true standard of righteous living is elsewhere than among mankind, yet the Theosophical Society reflects that standard, and that our movement is intended to become a world within the world—a world from out the future, dwelling in the present as a living example of a partly realised ideal. The Theosophical Society must become a World-State in miniature, and

its members citizens thereof That which we exhort the world to do we must ourselves be doing. In every field of life our Buddhist consciousness must be growing active. We must stand for Brotherhood in daily life, in religion, in politics, in industry, in education, in international relations I have sought to convey a glimpse of what this means in "The Australian Section: A Vision" (See Appendix E), for that which I have written there of Australia I conceive to be true of every Section and of the whole Society. Our precepts are valuable, for they constitute an unveiling of Truth which the world has forgotten or needs to know But example founded on these precepts is far more valuable, for it is better to see Theosophy than to hear it, as it is better to live it than to see it.

If we could only live *our* Theosophy in the world, accustoming the world to suffer it gladly, the time might come for the world to be ready to suffer gladly our Masters to live *Their* Theosophy in the world. But to a world yet in the twilight the sunshine can come safely only by degrees Let the Theosophical Society be the dawn heralding that glorious day when in the very outer world itself the mighty Circle of Brotherhood shall be complete. Within the Society there must be no such problems as those

which disfigure the world. Within the Society-State there must be comradeship in all things, be the diversities of custom, opinion or outlook what they may.

The Theosophical Society is greater than its members, for is not the shadow less than the substance, the sunshine less than the Sun? Never for an instant may we forget that our primary allegiance is to the Society itself apart both from any of its members or from any of the beliefs which they may hold. We must learn to recognise that no identification by the ignorant of certain specific doctrines with the Society as a whole makes such identification a fact. It is as if some people passed before a great mansion and, seeing through an open window a room with a green carpet, green furniture, green wall-paper and green decorations, generally declared that the whole house was entirely green. In the mansion of the Society are many rooms, each with its own colour, but all within the house and belonging to one community, though some members of the community live in one room and others in another.

The Society is a great receiving station for Brotherhood from the inner worlds, transmitting it now specifically in the shape of definite

Truths, now generally as vitalising force. Through the latter the Brotherhood-spirit in mankind is stimulated and finds expression according to individual temperament and place in evolution. All are welcome to membership in whom Brotherhood is stirring, no matter what form it takes. The Society stands for Brotherhood unqualified, encouraging all movements, all individuals, sincerely dedicated to Brotherhood, be their objectives what they may. It is doubtless possible to define Brotherhood. Each individual should be able to define it more or less satisfactorily to himself, and on every plane of consciousness there is a definition appropriate to the plane, as I have suggested in my definitions of Buddhist and Nirvanic consciousness. But the Society offers no definition. It asks from each his acts of Brotherhood, leaving him to define it as he will and as he can.

I have had to write this, because it seems to follow from my Nirvanic meditation upon the Society. Standing, as the Society does, for Buddha in the outer world, it is, as it were, a kind of half-way house, between Nirvana (and all that is beyond Nirvana), between the ideal such as we can grasp (and all that may lie beyond our grasping), and these planes of nature upon which normally dwells the outer world.

The half-way house must by no means become an obstacle to the passage of the Sunlight of Nirvana to the plains of the outer world beneath, even though in travelling through the denser medium the rays must needs grow less intense. We must never forget the fact that the Society is but this half-way house, is merely a channel for that of which Brotherhood itself is a modification, for there is more than Brotherhood before us, though we may have yet to attain Brotherhood. Thus only can we hope to keep unsullied our great ideal.

I notice particularly that the problems of our life are non-existent in Nirvana. Nirvana may have its own problems; it has certainly none of ours. I do not know whether I am able to distinguish between a problem looked at in the light of Buddhi and looked at in the light of Nirvana. In either case, every circumstance that contributed to the making of the problem becomes resolved or transmuted. It ceases to be a problem, for the problem-constituting elements have disappeared. These elements are the products of the separative forces, of ignorance, and can find no place in the higher worlds. The selfishness which is the root cause of them all has burst its bonds, having no further cause for being. The world needs to be full of problems

upon which we may exercise God's gift of choice, discrimination. But less and less do we need to choose deliberately as choice through experience becomes automatic, instinctive, or, let us say, intuitive.

In Buddhi we reach the Unity. In Nirvana we are the Light which is the heart of Unity, the essence of its being. The world becomes in many ways a far simpler and easier place in which to live. The solution of the problems are so obvious, however hard it may be for the world as a whole to accept them, and not only are they obvious, but simple, easy to bring about, provided we are big enough to grasp them firmly. Therein lies the difficulty, of course. All that leads to Light is right. All that leads to darkness is wrong. It is no longer a question of creed or colour or race or nationality. All is perceived in terms of greater or lesser Light. "Let there be Light," we echo. "More Light," we exclaim, with Goethe. The growing consciousness of Nirvana intensifies the Light of our being—the very world itself is the brighter for the entry of one of its children into Nirvana—and darkness of whatever kind grows increasingly unnatural. We rule out black even down to its apparently most insignificant expressions, as for example in the case of ink or dress, and we

only use it *faute de mieux*, under protest. There is nothing black either in Nirvana or in Buddhi. Life is much simpler than it appears. Complexity is the muddle of ignorance. The more we know the simpler life becomes. Nothing is difficult to do if we want to do it. It is not difficult to do even if we have to do it alone, against the crowd, provided we want to do it. Where there is the will there is the way.

It is interesting to look at a special problem, let us say, the industrial problem. What is the solution? Obviously, comradeship, complete fellowship between the two classes of workmen, whom down here we call employers and employed—rather distorting terminology since the employed employ the employers as much as the employers employ the employed. In these higher regions there is this fellowship. Nothing else could exist. In the lower worlds the difficulty is to obtain it. In the higher worlds it is impossible to avoid it. The solution of the industrial problem lies in the two sections working together as one, as they will have to work sooner or later. That is easier said than done, we are told. Yet it ought to be done as easily as said, for it is the final truth. With brotherhood on both sides it would be an accomplished fact. With brotherhood on neither

side it becomes impossible. No compulsion from without will ever bring it about; no legislation or arbitration of any kind. All these are compromises, bargainings, between truth and falsehood, and cannot last. There must be the urge from within.

CHAPTER IX

A FURTHER READJUSTMENT

LOOKING down upon myself from the viewpoint of Nirvanic consciousness, I am most interested to perceive my first impression to be that of watching a dynamo churning out power, but with only part of the machinery at work. I see enormous potentialities still to be unfolded, only certain powers being actually in operation, and even these only partially. I am amazed at the possibilities—I should rather say at the certainties—of the future, but I think I am even more amazed at the fact that I am an integral part of our Lord the Sun Himself. I notice, I think, an unbroken line of connection between the Sun and myself, as between the Sun and all things. This connection is to all intents and purposes a physical connection, for although the connection is a Light connection, yet that very Light is composed of particles, and it exercises quite appreciable physical modification upon my physical body as well as upon

my other bodies Light has weight, mass, momentum. I am therefore a nucleus of force within larger nuclei of forces, within a Heavenly Man, within the Sun Himself, even as He is a nucleus of force within a still larger system. From one point of view, therefore, the whole system of which the Sun is the heart is a solid body with every part as closely connected and interrelated as the various parts of our physical bodies.

Hence, I am a solar system in miniature, with a central sun, with planets, with all the appurtenances—in embryonic miniature—of the solar system as we know them Do I reproduce in myself the movements of a solar system? Do parts of me revolve round a central part of me? Does the central part of me revolve? At all events the whole of me revolves, for at least I revolve with the world of which I am part. But if I do not mistake, there are these various revolutions. I seem to see myself as a co-ordinated mass of intricately revolving worlds, reminding me of numbers of catharine wheels in a fireworks display. I seem to see the various great centres (chakra) revolving in co-ordinate motion round the central heart. If it does not sound flippant, I should like to say that I see myself as a kind of glorified

fireworks, part of still more glorified fireworks, with the Universe as a supreme display of fireworks on an unimaginable scale. But these fireworks are continuous, and do not splutter out.

What astonishes me more than anything else is the potentiality, marvellous beyond words, of even the minutest fragment of myself. I gaze upon the heavens with their myriad constellations, and I see all these reflected in each and every atom of my being. There is enough potentiality in each and every atom to build all I see around me. An atom, universe as it is with its central nucleus round which revolve its constituent planets, is an epitomised Universe, containing within itself every single element needed for the development of every plane and all kingdoms of nature. This may sound an absurd exaggeration, yet it is true—obviously true—for every atom is imprisoned Sun-Life, that Life which brought our Universe, with all its wonderful complexities, into being.

Look into the Heavens and perceive God's glories. Gaze at yourself and it is as if you were looking at a reflection of these vastnesses. Indeed you are looking at their reflection. There is as much an astronomy of the human body as there is an astronomy of the stars, and

from the Nirvanic level of consciousness it is clearly possible to perceive the essential identity between the astronomy of the microcosm—myself—and the macrocosm—the heavens. I certainly perceive Nirvana-potentiality in every single atom of my being, and I perceive the fact that the centre of my system is awakening into Nirvanic potentiality, so that the atoms of my own being may be clearly distinguished from those of one who is not developed to this extent. Further, the emanations from me, my radiations, acquire perceptibly added brilliance on this account, as they did at all lower stages of expansion of consciousness. Pursuing this fact to its logical conclusion, every good thought, good feeling, good word, good action—goodness being, of course, a relative term—adds its own brilliance both to the individual as a whole and to his radiations. The whole world is the brighter (perceptibly so to consciousness at the necessary level of sensitiveness) for the tiniest goodness, that is to say for the tiniest increasingly positive harmonisation, in any part of the lesser will, with the Will Universal.

I perceive that the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness at the centre means a raising of the level of consciousness in every part of my

being. Every part takes a step upward, or inward, in consciousness. There is begun a new refinement in each body and in every part of each body; and not only is this true, it is also true that the whole world makes an appreciable advance in consciousness-expansion, and there is more Light, more Unity in its smallest component atom. Obviously this must be so, in view of the intimate interrelation between every part, of the identity of all life amidst the innumerable diversities of its appearance. Hence a service to any part of the world, however microscopic, is a service to the whole world, and *vice versa*. This truth applies equally, of course, to disservice.

I seem to perceive a new meaning for the phrase "Mind your own business." I have a whole universe to look after, in which I am the humble representative of our Lord the Sun. I have as much as I can do to look after this world of mine, especially when I remember how potently it affects all other worlds around me. It may be that it is my duty to assist for a time one or more worlds in my vicinity, in which case I must mind their business a little, but with the very greatest respect, since I can know so little of these other worlds, so much less than I know of my own—and how little I

know of my own! My main preoccupation, therefore, must be with my world, with its purity and brilliance, so that it may become a joy in itself, and therefore a joy to other worlds.

The new conception of life—of my own life, and of all other life—that I gain through the perception of myself not only as a world but as a universe of worlds, forms, indeed, a most fascinating avenue of investigation. I do not think I at all understood the impressive significance of the relation between the microcosm “I” and the macrocosm without until I looked upon both in terms of Nirvanic consciousness. This significance discloses itself in two outstanding directions. First, the glory. Second, the responsibility. As for the first, I hope I have been able to convey something at least of the glory of Nirvana even in the halting descriptions I have ventured to give in the preceding pages. With regard to the responsibility, this comes to me in the realisation that as the Sun is the Glory of His Universe so must I learn to be the glory of mine. Indeed, I am a Sun in microscopic miniature. I am the Sun of my being. I am the humble representative of our Lord the Sun. I look up towards Him. I see a little of that which He is to all the worlds. And I see that as He is supremely to His

Universe, so must I be supremely to mine. We are all His Suns, with universes to look after and gradually to develop, as He has so gloriously developed His. The universe without is the embodied promise of fulfilment for all smaller universes which form its being. I look up towards the Sun, and visibly before my eyes shines, as from the future, the supreme and inevitable glorification of myself.

The Sun is multiplying Himself in us. And do I not know that beyond our glorious Sun there are Suns more glorious still? What limit is there, then, to man's unfoldment? He has ascended from the infinitely small; he shall ascend to the infinitely great. The Heavens about us stand guarantee and witness. Every law astronomy postulates with regard to the Universe as a whole runs equally in every part. There is not a single function in the larger Universe which has not a counterpart in the smaller. And when we read of the way in which a Universe comes into being, let us remember that we have a description—utterly inadequate, of course—of some Great Being—become-God entering upon the mighty Sacrifice, itself from another standpoint the beginning of a new expansion of His Being, of guiding to self-conscious Divinity all parts of His Nature

which fall short of His complete Self-consciousness, no matter at what stage of lesser consciousness they may be. God multiplies Himself by every part of Himself and the result is self-conscious God in every part. Every seed becomes a perfect, eternal Flower.

The simile comes to me of the oak and its acorns. God is as the oak, and every part of Him is an acorn. As each acorn grows, so does the oak grow; and some acorns are at one stage of growth, others at other stages. There is an oak-acorn universe, and as one series of acorns transcends the purely acorn stage, another series takes its place. Thus, there is an endless series of growings at all stages, and the oak-father himself grows as his externalised life grows, for however much acorns may fall here and there, be blown hither and thither by the winds, the one life unites parents and children, and the growth of each reacts upon all the rest. And by and by certain acorns grow into oaks, and themselves give forth acorns. The oak has his seasons for acorn-bearing. Has God His seasons, too? Or with God is the process of manifestation continuous, an endless stream of life issuing from His Being?

Nirvana seems to be drawing so near to me, or perhaps my centre is so definitely, however

slowly, shifting to the Nirvanic plane, that I find myself more and more relating every phase and feature of the outer world to its Nirvanic archetype or counterpart. I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in this world, or out of it for the matter of that, which is not in some degree a reflection of Nirvana. The outer world is after all Nirvana objectified, Nirvana densified, the shadow of Nirvana. Every plane below is the reflection of the plane—of all planes—above

The objectification, the densification, the shadow, the reflection, may be a distortion, but only, I think, as I have suggested elsewhere, when it has fulfilled its purpose. There is no absolute distortion, only relative distortion, and by the word "distortion," therefore, I must mean a form inadequate to the level of unfoldment attained by the particular life which may be in question. That which is inadequate is wrong. That which is adequate, or perhaps more than adequate, is right. As I write this, I wonder if there are any things in the outer worlds which are fundamentally wrong, or if at the worst they are inevitable, given certain conditions which themselves, it may be, ought not to exist. Take, for example, a liquor shop. On first consideration, I am

inclined to decide emphatically that a liquor shop is fundamentally wrong. But then I ask myself whether a liquor shop may not be the only place, under existing circumstances, in which certain people can forget that which they ought never to have needed to know. Life is very grey for many people. From time to time they must needs forget its greyness, if they cannot alter it. The public house temporarily solves, in a ghastly manner, the problems of life for many people. Woe unto those of us by whom this offence comes! But until we are able to provide something better to take its place, the public house remains. Do I hurt my readers' feelings, or shock them, when I say that the public house does represent a pitiful attempt of man to reflect that glorious self-realisation after which each one of us yearns in his heart? Shame upon us that we should suffer so hideous a distortion to dwell in our midst; far more shame upon us who tolerate it than upon those who are driven to it.

This brings me to the point I want to make. Each one of us must constantly strive to live according to his own highest standards, and not according to conventional standards which represent less than the highest, at least so far as regards those to whom Theosophical

teachings appeal. The need for this is borne in upon me very strongly at a time when standards which have hitherto sufficed me must no longer suffice. The conventions of my old world are not the conventions of the new, and I must change accordingly. Is it not true to say that the conventions of the pre-war world are not the conventions of the post-war world, or ought not to be, and that the world needs to change accordingly? So it is with me. The pre-Nirvanic world is utterly different from the Nirvanic world, and there is hardly a detail of life which does not need readjustment, because everything is revealed in a new Light—literally in a new Light

I am immensely struck by the extraordinary difference in the values of words. The dictionary is a new book to me, for every word in it has—I was going to say a new meaning, but certainly a new power. Words are power-universes, power-atoms, and they are exploded by being uttered. The power in them is released and goes on its errand. Have certain words evil errands, and other good errands? In some is there the power that makes for righteousness, while in others there is power that makes for relative unrighteousness? I have yet to examine this question. In the

meantime I am almost appalled at the power of language and at the gravity of careless usage of words. Until we know what we do, may be we shall be forgiven, but when we begin to know what we do, there is no justification for a forgiveness which means either that because the will behind the utterance is so little potent, therefore the result is more or less negligible, or that counter-balancing forces are introduced to neutralise the effect. In the one case there is forgiveness from within, in the other forgiveness from without.

For the time being I am occupied in watching the jars made both by my own utterances and by what I hear from the lips of those around me. Certain words jar me terribly. I must be careful to avoid them. I wonder why they have not disturbed me before. But the fact that I can be thus hurt by myself I take to be a good sign. It means that from time to time I am able to live outside my lower self, and to compare the larger with the smaller, and it also means that I can understand, as a matter of pure personal remembrance, how other people are not affected by that which only a short while ago seemed by no means discordant to me; nor must I expect them to be shaken, or be impatient of

their not being upset, simply because I happen now to be agitated by something which has hitherto not shocked me at all. I see clearly that there is little use in reaching Nirvanic consciousness unless such attainment stimulates at-one-ment. True attainment, in whatever sphere or department of life, is deeper at-one-ment, and reality of achievement may be measured by increased strength of unification. That which definitely promotes union is accomplishment, that which does not is not true gain at all, whatever the outer world may call it.

Not only does this new Nirvanic element profoundly modify my appreciation of language, but equally my appreciation of everything else, of people, of landscape, of cities, of animals, of business, of pleasures. The new element of Nirvanic consciousness enters into all things, or I should rather say is suddenly perceived in all things as well as in myself, and the effect is of looking upon a world one has never seen before. As I have already suggested, the languages I know are new languages, for the words now possess hitherto unperceived connotations and relationships.

So do books I do not think the modification of consciousness is anywhere more marked at

present in any case than in books. I went the other day into one of our largest bookshops, and I found myself amidst a weird babel of sounds. Every volume was vocal. In each book was its author speaking his message—in some cases powerfully, clearly, upliftingly; in other cases, at the other extreme, vaguely, purposelessly, vulgarly perhaps, often sordidly, or sometimes with a well-chiselled form distressingly empty of purpose. Each work was a sound-scheme, often a jarring sound-scheme, but sometimes a beautiful symphony. Each book, too, was a light-scheme, a dull light-scheme, a lurid light-scheme, a bright, clear light-scheme, now and then a gorgeous light-scheme. I was not able to follow up this discovery, but I knew that books are alive, that some are in the savage state, and thence there is graded ascent in evolution to God-books, such as the Scriptures, and others less than these, yet great. I cannot pursue further this fascinating theme, but it will be realised that books are now no longer mere tomes, they are living beings, for which their creators have serious responsibility, which speak and shed their influence around them. A book in a room is a factor with which we have to reckon, a library is a potent force.

One of the most awe-inspiring effects flowing from the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness has been in connection with the celebration of Holy Eucharist. When I had the honour of celebrating this great Sacrament in the Church of St. Alban, Sydney, for the first time after beginning to make my voyages of discovery in the realms of Light, I found that an extraordinary change had taken place. In any case the ceremony is most impressive, but I have never before been so conscious of its power, and I endeavoured to trace this newly-awakened consciousness to its source. It seemed to me that this marvellous Sacrament is taking place at all times on all planes. When we celebrate it down here we are merely for the time being bringing ourselves into conscious relationship with its eternal processes, becoming more unobstructed channels for its expression in and through ourselves. Clearly, I think, the act of celebration on the physical plane is a distinct gathering together of the essential forces of the Holy Eucharist, so that they affect in special measure the surroundings in the midst of which the ceremony takes place.

But I also saw that the Holy Eucharist is the expression of a Law of evolving Life. Hence Eucharistic processes are ever at work, as are

the processes of all other great Sacraments. Sacraments are sacrifices, expressions of the eternal and continuous sacrifice of God. We ourselves, and all that lives, are embodied acts of God's sacrifice, and the Eucharist is a mode of the growth of all things. I was wonderfully conscious of this at every moment of the celebration. In the first place, I was clearly conscious of expressing, evoking, manipulating, the Eucharistic power on a plane other than the physical, so that the physical words and actions seemed to be but the echoes of the real sounds, and I performed the actual physical movements as in a dream.

At the words, "May the Lord purify me that I may worthily perform His Service," it was as if the purification took the form of a translation of myself elsewhere, into Nirvanic consciousness in fact, and at that level making a special channel for the Eucharistic Light to descend into the matter of the physical plane through every intermediate plane, so as to effect everywhere a special concentration of already existing Eucharistic activity. I noticed how every physical act from the beginning to the end helped in the preparation of the physical plane for the reception of the mighty forces stirring so gloriously elsewhere. I heard at

one level the gradual weaving together of beautiful notes into a marvellous symphony of sound reaching a stupendous apotheosis at the act of transubstantiation of the Bread and Wine, an apotheosis reproduced in each one of us in the act of Communion and, equally beautifully but differently, in the two great Benedictions at the close.

At a higher level, the Nirvanic, there began an indescribable interplay of Light, with penetrating flashes of glorious radiance at each of the great stages. I do not know whether I was simultaneously conscious on several planes, or whether it was a case of rapid passing from one to another. Be this as it may, on the physical plane every word uttered, every act performed, every step taken, seemed alive with power, with great outflowing pulsations of forces surging in all directions.

As for myself, so far as regards the physical plane, I was in a dream, the centre of my waking consciousness having transferred itself elsewhere. But this dream-condition was by no means a state of diminished physical-plane effectiveness. On the contrary, I knew I was far more effective than normally by very reason of the dream-condition, which was a sign of the minimisation of the static interference of the

physical body due to the density of its composition. The physical body had been sublimated to its utmost measure in order the more easily to transmit the forces generated on higher planes, and the dream-condition was the result of a very conscious working from within rather than from without. The physical body was but the river's mouth opening on to the sea of outer life. Far away were those mighty mountain torrents which made the river and sent it forth to the sea.

I wonder if I can at all make clear the effect of the retirement of the centre of consciousness from an outer to an inner plane. I presume that the effect of every Initiation is not merely an expansion of the circumference of consciousness, but also a very definite modification in the centre of consciousness, which appears to be in the nature of a retirement to an inner region, because, after each Step, one finds oneself from one point of view living in a new field of consciousness more than in the old. This new field is a subtler field, a more archetypal field, and the apparent withdrawal inwards of the centre of consciousness is due to the fact that the old world of consciousness has lost some of its supreme and exclusive significance. No longer is it able to exact the lion's share of

attention. It must take its place among other worlds, a place suitable to its station in life. No longer is it able to occupy the whole of the foreground of the picture. Other worlds very properly claim their place, and the old world must make room for them.

The taking of the first of the Great Initiations synchronises with the beginning of the retirement of the centre of consciousness to the Buddhist plane—the plane of Unity. This process becomes intensified in the course of the Second and Third Initiations, and it seems as if the centre of consciousness should be firmly established in Buddhī by the time the fruits of that stage are being gathered. Then, at the fourth of the Great Initiations, the centre of consciousness tends to move still further inwards, and begins to make a home on the Nirvanic plane, a process which should be complete at the fifth of the Great Initiations.

In the light of my own experience, it is certainly accurate to speak of a withdrawal or retirement of the centre of consciousness if we look at what has happened from one aspect only. I feel able to say quite definitely that Nirvana is now my true home, though I have only just taken possession of my new estate

and have yet to explore it. But I am living in Nirvana, whatever excursions I may take into the regions without. I shall often be visiting my old homes, but I shall no longer be living in any of them except quite temporarily, and in any case even when I do live in them I am living "from" this newer home. I may regularly visit the scenes of my "childhood," of my various "childhoods," but they will have ceased to be as "real" as once they were. Hence, occupying this new home, all outer worlds are, from one point of view, dreamlands. Still following this point of view, to return to the physical plane is to go through a series of fallings asleep. I fall asleep from the Nirvanic to the Buddhist plane. I fall asleep from the Buddhist to the mental plane, from the mental to the emotional, from the emotional to the physical plane. In one sense, therefore, I may be said to fall fast asleep on this outermost plane, however much in ordinary parlance I am supposed to wake up.

But this by itself would be a very inaccurate description of the facts. True, all outer worlds are worlds of shadows compared with the inner worlds. To me the Nirvanic world is the supremely real world, though to Those at higher levels even the Nirvanic splendours must be but

as shadows of something still greater. This physical world is in many ways far more of a dreamland than ever it has been before. I have discovered a new contrast. I had already known the contrast between the Buddhic and the physical worlds. Now I am beginning to know that between the Nirvanic and the physical world, and the greater brightness necessarily intensifies the shadows. Yet, in fact, even the outermost world is a world of reality. The densest matter is no less Divinity than the most refined, the distinction being but in degree of self-consciousness. The outer world may be a dreamland, a world of shadows, yet it is God's dream, God's shadow; and God's dreams come true. From this point of view, therefore, dreamland becomes a very real land, in which we must be happy to work, even though we *live* elsewhere, because we have the glorious task of making the dream-world come true. We look out from our Nirvanic window upon the world without. We see how infinitely less beautiful it all is than the home in which we live. But we see, too, how beautiful it might become. So we leave our Nirvanic home, taking its memories with us, and in the light of these memories we strive to fashion the Real out of that dream of the Real which,

for convenience's sake, we call the unreal.
When we say :

From the unreal lead us to the Real,
From darkness lead us to Light,
From death lead us to Immortality ,

we are in truth saying

From the unconscious lead us to the Self-
Conscious,
From the dream lead us to the True,
From the beginning lead us to the End.

The unreal is the promise of the Real. Darkness is the shadow of Light. Death is the gateway to Immortality. In the unreal help me to find the Real. In the darkness help me to find the Light. In death enable me to perceive Immortality.

It is but natural, especially at the earlier stages of Nirvanic realisation, that the outer worlds should be emphasised in their dream-aspect rather than in their real aspect. For the time being the dream-world may seem more of a dream-world than ever. And there may be some excuse for yearning for Nirvana as one moves about in the midst of the physical plane. A child may well be forgiven for being all eagerness about the wonderful new discovery he has made, and for a certain temporary listlessness with regard to more habitual surroundings.

But we live under the great law of readjustment, and it should not take us long to come to the conclusion that in this very dream-world we have the joyous task of making it come *true*. We begin to understand that our very realisation of Nirvana depends upon our work in the dream-world.

I suppose it is possible to realise Nirvana without actually working on the physical plane, but it is not possible to realise it without working somewhere; and it does not matter where we work. Why not, then, help to pay the debt we owe to the physical plane and all there is in it? As I write these words, I am reminded of the fact that in the charming conception of Father Christmas bringing gifts to little children we have one of the most beautiful of truths. Every Saviour of the world is a Father Christmas, His hands laden with good things for His world. Every good man holds the same position to his world. Every one of us who has taken a step nearer to truth must become a benefactor laden with truth. More than ever must I, too, because of the new gifts bestowed upon me, become a more enthusiastic distributor of my world. The world is like the little child wondering what Christmas will bring, even hoping, perhaps, for this or that,

dreaming of all the wonderful things which will be by its bedside when it wakes in the morning. Sometimes there may be disappointment. Sometimes what is good rather than what is desired may be brought. Sometimes we receive what we desire in order that we may learn the lesson that what we wish is not always what is good. Sometimes we receive what is wanted because our wish is right. Let our wishes be always for the good and the true, that this dream-world of ours may come true, may reflect as perfectly as may be the higher worlds of which it is the physical body. We must live in dreams that they may come true, for the dream is the seed of the Real, as the Real is the future of the seed in an Eternal Now.

CHAPTER X

MOTHER-LIGHT

NO more glorious vision has Nirvana given me than that of the apotheosis—or must I say again, an apotheosis—of womanhood. We are familiar with the conception of God the Father, but little information is there regarding God the Mother. Yet we come nearer an ultimate Reality when we begin to be able to sense the Mother-Principle as co-eternal with the Father-Principle, co-existent with it, both emerging from one ineffable source. So far as I am aware, in every great faith the Mother-Principle finds noble and wonderful expression, perhaps as Power-Sacrifice, impersonal, “awful” in the true sense of the word, or perhaps as Purity-Sacrifice, an ideal woman, such, for example, as we have in Christianity in Our Lady

In terms of Nirvana I seem to perceive a Mother-Light and a Father-Light, each a component part of the lightning-standing-still. I

wonder whether I can differentiate between the two. The Mother-Light impresses me first of all with a sense of Restraint, of reserved Power, of Refuge, of Protection. I seem to see within the glorious embodiments in the outer world of this great Mother-Light a radiant sea of Light, and the image comes to me of a vast expanse of still and silent ocean glittering in the soft light of the full moon, the slight ripples causing a ceaseless shimmering. Think what the ocean is. Remember its tremendous, irresistible power. But this ocean of the Mother-Light is never lashed into storm—it remains ever peaceful, ever calm, inscrutable, deep beyond the power of words to express, yet shimmering, scintillating, with the Love-Light it reflects, that God-Light which is the Light without a second.

In this great sea of Mother-Light lives every woman in the world, in all worlds. Its Light permeates her and its sea upholds her, so that she rests upon it, is enfolded in it. How calm is this sea of Light, how utterly safe, how wondrously near to every woman in all worlds! Indeed it is more than near, for I perceive that every woman is one with this mighty sea, is indeed a little channel through which it flows outwards to generate and to fructify all life:

Mater Genetratrix. As broods the Mother-Light over every act of renewal in every kingdom of Nature, so should every woman know herself to be the priestess of this Light Divine to every kingdom of Nature. What a mission! How splendid an office! Woman the Fire of Creation.

At this point let me for a moment place in juxtaposition the Father-Light. What do I perceive in differentiation? Action, a Flashing Forth, may I say a storm-ridden sea, pulsating with mighty outpourings? The Positive complementary to the Negative; the two mighty Poles of manifested Being. Entering the essence of these two great Lights I see the One. And almost I begin to understand the One, because as I watch (or is it as I change?) I perceive the Light-quality dissolve into apparent nothingness—it is not really nothingness—and there remains a More-than-Light, that to which even Light owes its being. I can say no more. But I realise how both Father-Light and Mother-Light must together express this More-than-Light as it assumes the shadow of manifestation.

I return to the contemplation of the Mother-Light. Instantly the image of mighty Pallas Athena comes before my inner sight. In some

wonderful way She seems a most perfect form of Mother-Light, infinitely majestic, awe-inspiring, a Sanctuary in which the afflicted take refuge and issue forth strong and unafraid, a great Heartener, Queen of Heaven's Ministering Powers. The ancient statues of Her convey something of Her Glory. As I gaze upon her, a miracle happens. I see myriads of Her. For a moment I wonder what has happened, but almost immediately I perceive that I see her reflected in all womanhood in all kingdoms of Nature. Every woman a sparkling jewel of the Mother-Light, imprisoning its glories to release them on their way. The whole world should sparkle with these jewels, yet many are dull, lifeless, dimmed by desecration.

Where are the women to restore to womanhood its splendid lustre? Where are the women to lead the women of every Nation on a great crusade to recover and fulfil their heritage? How long shall it be ere women remember that their bodies are shrines of the Mother-Light at which they may worship with mighty Sacraments, among them those of Marriage and Motherhood? How long shall it be ere children are born in holy Temples rather than in hovels of lust? How long shall it be before the body of the little child is in very truth the sacred

consummation of blended Mother-Light and Father-Light, dedicated to noble purposes because conceived in holy aspiration ?

I suppose this sounds utterly alien from modern ideas of Motherhood, womanhood, childhood. But I have been abiding awhile in the Real, and I have been living in the intense yearning of the world-Mother that Her children may draw nearer to Her, so that She may press them to Her heart. Where there is sorrow, grief, despair, agony, there is the world-Mother, tending, cherishing, comforting, as many a pain-stricken mother knows, as many a lonely child knows too. Yet She could do so much more, would womanhood but turn to Her. The Christ returns to His world ; many of us know this, and are preparing a welcome for our Guest and Father. But do we know, too, that with Him comes the world-Mother ? Not, perhaps, in Her own most glorious Form, though possibly in bodies consecrated specifically to Her use ; nevertheless She comes, and Her mission is to the women of the world, to remind them of the glory of womanhood, to summon them to lead the world and to give to the world great men and women, and to exhort them to make womanhood worthy of reverence as She will exhort men to reverence womanhood. We ask

the world to welcome its Christ. We ask women to welcome their Mother as She returns to the world She loves with Her Son Who is Her King.

How clearly I perceive the Nirvanic Glory of womanhood, so distorted and misshapen down here. Womanhood *in excelsis*! And I see, in this return of the Christ, Heaven that is Nirvana kissing earth and endowing earth once more with its glories, and none greater than the Mother-Light. Downward shines the Mother-Light through every world-Mother this earth has ever known. Once again do They come near to the world which aforesaid They have mothered. Once more They stir in the heart of every woman, summoning her to light again the sacrificial Fire in the temple of her being. Many They call to the sacraments of Marriage and individual Motherhood. But They call all to that wider motherhood of which the world is being so disastrously deprived in these modern days when men and women alike have forgotten woman's true place in life

In an article appearing in the August issue (1926) of the *Liberal Catholic* of Sydney, Australia, I ventured to describe a little glimpse of Our Lady which I had in the light of

Nirvana. I reproduce it here as the externalisation of the flash in which I first began to know Her as far as I am capable of understanding Her. I saw a Light. I have put that Light into feeble words.

There is no more beautiful or mysterious truth in the world than the truth conveyed in those infinitely touching words—"Our Lady." In every faith we find this truth. It is almost the heart of every faith. Each faith has its Power, its Wisdom and its Love. Within all three lies enshrined Motherhood—directing the Power, enlightening the Wisdom, beautifying the Love. Our Lady, chatelaine of the castle of the world, is wonderful as the Mother of Jesus, infinitely appealing to all that is noblest in us. Jesus, the Vehicle of our Lord the Christ. Our Lady the Way of the Christ to His World. In Her Holiness She is far, far away from us. In Her Motherhood She is "nearer than hands and feet".

But she is more even than the Mother of Jesus, more than the Symbol of Her in any faith, for we find Her on every plane of nature, in every kingdom of nature. I ascend the loftiest regions I am capable of reaching, and there I find Her—Light Radiant, a Light exquisitely distinguishable from all other

Light. In that Light glows the Mother-Principle of Light and Life and Glory. I am face to face with the shadow of the Motherhood of God. I see Her as the supreme embodiment of Motherhood everywhere, in all kingdoms, on all planes. She is the Universal Mother—the apotheosis of all that makes motherhood the purest reflection of the Nature of God. In every act of motherhood is marvellously reflected and ever renewed the supreme wonder of the Sacrifice of God, so that motherhood becomes the most sacred thing in the world.

Wherever there is motherhood there is Our Lady, and as I write these words there comes before me the picture of “The Lady of the Lamp”—Florence Nightingale, as she passes from bedside to bedside among the wounded in her hospital at Scutari, carrying comfort and courage to every sufferer. I see this picture as a faint image of the Compassion of Our Lady, as She moves from bedside to bedside among the women-expectant of the world. The whole world is Her hospice, and myriad-formed she broods with infinite tenderness over every mother-to-be as she consummates her divine Act of Remembrance of the Sacrifice of God.

I am told, too, the story of the poor Hindu girl in an Indian village who, about to become a mother, was anxiously expecting her own mother to “mother” her in her time of exquisite trial, through a crucifixion into a resurrection. Her mother lived far away, but was hastening to her daughter’s side. She had not arrived when the agonies of birth began, but Another Mother was there in her form, so that the girl rejoiced that her mother had come in time. Tenderly Parvati—our Lady of the Hindus, the Mother-Principle—guided Her child through the sacrament of Motherhood, enfolding her in joy and peace. At last the mother herself came, and Our Lady vanished. But the young mother knew not what had happened, and one day thanked her mother for her marvellous tenderness and care. Astonished, the older woman answered that to her great grief and anxiety she had not been able to arrive in time, but was so happy to see that someone else had bestowed upon her child a mother’s care. “But . . .” said the daughter, and then upon them smiled Parvati, and they understood and rejoiced in deepest reverence and gratitude.

At every Sacrament of Motherhood Our Lady ministers, and many women there be who see

Her, while all who are conscious of the Sacrament know in full measure that Peace which is Her Presence. To all She comes, taking for each the form she loves and worships. How wonderful is the Motherhood of God, the Mother-Principle of Life . . . a glowing Glory, a glowing Triumph, a glowing Tenderness, a glowing Sacrifice, a glowing Understanding, a glowing Power to guard and cherish. The Light which is this Mother-Principle flashes forth many-hued, encircling the world, radiating upon all things. In every kingdom of Nature shines this perfect Light. Upon every act of creation it rests in priceless benediction. Of this Light Our Lady, this Universal Mother of us all, is the Epiphany, the embodied Form. She is a Being, a Person, Who has trodden this glorious road to Divinity, and has reached at-one-ment in Motherhood. No picture, no words, can describe Her, yet She is no abstraction, no pure Principle, but Mother-Light in glorious Form. By the side of every mother does She stand as the mother bears splendid witness in her own physical body that she is a Temple of the Living God, and that in her this Sacrifice is mirrored anew for the wonder of this world. It is Our Lady Who is the High Priestess at this holy sacrifice. It is

Our Lady Who touches the agony and makes it joy, Who offers the sacrifice and makes it bliss.

Each mother-to-be is a Temple made ready for our Lady. Never does She fail to come when the offering is upon the altar, an image of God to be sent forth into the world on a further journey in the Great Quest. And even beforehand come Angels of Her Presence, ministering, comforting, encouraging, glorifying. Can you perceive from this great sacrament of birth, how great indeed, how solemn, is the sacrament that precedes it—the sacrament of marriage? Over every marriage, truly, broods Our Lady's Blessing. The married couple become Her children, united for that beautiful sacrifice of birth-giving which they prepare in shining love for offering by Our Lady. As in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharistic Service is the Real Presence of our Lord, so in every child-birth is the Real Presence of our Lady. How glorious the role of woman—temple, priestess, altar, chalice, in one! Is not every child-birth a marvellous Eucharistic Service—sacred and joyous beyond the power of words to paint?

Would that the old-time reverence for women returned! Would that women the world over entered into their heritage of priesthood! All

women may not be able to marry. Marriage may not be the vocation for every woman. Yet the priesthood remains. Is there not the service of the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament as well as the Eucharistic Service itself? Is there not so much in the world that woman alone can do, even though she be not called to be the priestess-mother? In these days when women have to earn their living—in many ways one cannot but regret the necessity, it savours of the world's want of reverence for womanhood—when women have to enter into so many of the sordid things of life, still may they remember the priesthood of their sex, that wherever they are and whatever they may be doing they remain the chosen priestesses and ministrants of Our Lady, to defend Motherhood against all degradation, to stand for the sacred rights of mother and of child, to represent the Mother-Principle in Life.

Is not every child a child of Our Lady, the Universal Mother, and sacred for that if for no other reason? Is not every woman, because of this, a mother to all children, only less near than the physical mother, ready to replace her should need arise? The world needs more motherhood. Has not Our Lady been too little remembered, though She has ever remembered?

Motherhood begins before birth, and nowhere can we see its ending. Through life, through death, we need the mother. No more cherished word than "mother". No word so fraught with tenderest memories. No word more potent to arouse the heart's most poignant yearnings. Let there be honour to Motherhood from women and men alike. Dishonour is there to the Christ where there is dishonour to Our Lady. Dishonour is there to the Christ where there is dishonour to woman or to mother, for every woman is a Temple of Our Lady, whatever be the sacrifice destined to its altar.

May every man bow in reverence before Her temples, may every woman cause Her light to shine upon the world. So shall the Mother-Light heal the wounds of the world, and make it new.

CHAPTER XI

THE DANGERS OF NIRVANA

THERE is, however, another side to all this. If this consciousness brings with it such wonderfully increased power, such certainty of immortality in bliss, it brings also greatly increased responsibility. It gives me a new and higher life, but I must live up to that life; to fall from that level, however slightly, is a very serious matter. For example, I have had an experience which I think is worthy of record in this book. The other day, when things were for the moment going somewhat awry, or perhaps I myself was a little off my guard, I felt—I am ashamed to say—somewhat irritable, and I am afraid I expressed myself irritably to one or two of my colleagues. The feeling was slight, and passed almost immediately, but its effect was really quite extraordinary. To all intents and purposes, effective work became impossible for the rest of the day. I worked, I went through routine duties; but the *elan vital* was absent.

The very moment I weakly allowed irritability to enter, peace departed, and I knew at once I had made a serious mistake. The irritability was only superficial ; it was certainly not deep down, yet the disturbance even of the surface sent a shock through the whole system, and excluded me for the time being from the new kingdom I had hitherto been successfully inhabiting. Everyone of my bodies, from the physical upwards or inwards, became disturbed, and I passed a very unpleasant time.

In the course of a recent address, Signor Mussolini advised his audience to live dangerously I have been thinking that to come into touch with Nirvanic consciousness is distinctly dangerous living, and this little episode of irritability has more than confirmed me in my opinion. In any case, to hold even a reflection of Nirvanic consciousness on the physical plane is no slight strain, for it means that every impact, whether from without or from within, is immeasurably intensified. That which to many might be but a ripple, to me is now a storm. The various bodies are infinitely more sensitive to external vibrations, while every word, feeling, thought, action, is charged with far greater power. The result is a much more intense living. Every minute is more fully

crammed than ever before "with sixty seconds' worth of distance run"

To control Nirvanic consciousness involves a stupendous increase of power—power which may be used for good or for evil. I presume that were it consistently used for evil it would have to be shut off. It would be too dangerous to allow Nirvanic power to flow in wrong directions. But, short of this, I have come to the conclusion that it is a dangerous experiment to entrust an individual with this power, as I have reason to know in connection with my moment of irritability. I had no idea the effect of a comparatively little outburst could last so long. As I write these words on the afternoon of the following day I am still suffering from the after effects.

I clearly perceive how dangerous it is to have weaknesses. I really do not know what I should do if I proved unable to control myself most rigidly, so that these weaknesses simply cease to exist. They must go if I am to travel with reasonable speed through the various sub-planes of Nirvana, or I might meet with a terrible catastrophe. Certain weaknesses are probably more dangerous than others. It is very dangerous to be proud, to be angry and irritable; to exaggerate, still more to lie; to misunderstand, to

wrong another, to be uncharitable, or destructively critical; to have prejudices and superstitions. For at least a couple of days life has been very much more difficult because of that moment of irritability. I hope my friends have not noticed anything, because it would only make matters worse to infect others with one's own particular strain. In any case, the difficulty has not been to be harmonious with the outer world, but to be receptive to the inner world. I have felt like some one who has, by his own act, been expelled from home, and is waiting in the outer cold until he can recover his equilibrium.

Every intensification of consciousness increases the delicacy of poise and balance of the human machine, so that, as time passes, smaller and smaller disturbances produce greater and greater effect. A little push gives a great swing—a dangerous swing, if the push be in the wrong direction. At the Nirvanic level ordinary human weaknesses have to become impossible. Their retention would simply mean disruption, disintegration. It is very dangerous to live in Nirvana and to maintain, perhaps even to increase, the contacts with the outer world. In many ways it would be much easier to retire to lonely places, to the forest, so that many

external circumstances, which tend to promote internal disturbances, might cease to be operative. On the other hand, for some of us, such retirement is not in the order of things, and we must bravely face the dangerous situation of immersion in the storms and stresses of the lower worlds. More and more must we abide in the Light we know, living ever at the centre and from the centre to the circumference, never away from the centre so that we lose our connection with it.

For a moment, during the period of irritability, I was away from my centre, and the result was—well, not disastrous, but at least highly disturbing. It is by no means easy to get back to the centre when one has broken away from it. I am getting back to the Light, but I have had a stern lesson, one which I hope I shall never forget; and I shudder to think what would happen if at any time I became really angry or indulged in one or other of those weaknesses which are intolerable to Nirvanic life. I should expect at the least an illness of the physical body as the reflection of illness elsewhere. I notice particularly how appalling are the effects of depression, unhappiness, cruelty, falsehood. These are the negation of the Light, and a clash between the positive

and the negative is productive of the most serious consequences. On the whole, I hope, I am gaining steadiness, and my one saving grace is, perhaps, absorption in the Masters' work, an absorption which makes me either forget or not care to do the things I might otherwise do to my own detriment and that of my surroundings. But I perceive very clearly the vital need for incessant watchfulness and self-control, and I venture to say to those who long for the glories I have endeavoured to describe: Remember the danger of holding Lightning while there is still dross to burn away. Remember the danger of recoil of power upon yourself when it meets weaknesses which have no business to thwart it as it should pass through you on its mission to the worlds without

Nirvana is Power. As we are, so shall we use it; but woe to us if we use it unwisely, ignorantly, selfishly! Lightning illumines, energises, but it also destroys and consumes. Are we certain of our strength and self-control to use it to illumine and to energise? Let us look at our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our speech. Let us take them as they are. Are they sometimes selfish, narrow, unkind? Now let us imagine Nirvana-Force vibrating

with all its marvellous power in every thought, feeling, action, word. The good in us will, of course, be magnified, but so will the weakness. More power in everything we think, feel, do or say. Looking at ourselves without prejudice, how often would Nirvanic force be flowing in undesirable channels? Take this experience of mine which I have just described. See the far-reaching results of just a touch, not of anger, but of irritability. Realise that in the midst of these results one must take the greatest care not to make matters still worse by being depressed or worried. On the contrary, one has to try to make up for one's foolishness at the very time when it is most difficult to do so. It is hard work indeed for a novice like myself, and frankly I do not recommend the experiment except under very adequate safeguards. I find life infinitely more wonderful and purposeful, but not for an instant must there be the slightest cessation of watchfulness over oneself.

I might add, perhaps, that the observable effects of the introduction of this momentary irritability were dullness, distinct diminution of keenness of perception, loss of the sense of ineffable peace, a sense of drooping power, of power frittered away instead of being

straight, direct and piercing. The scintillations of Light I have already described dulled down ; I seemed to have contracted. I do not want the experience again, and I shall try to avoid it.

CHAPTER XII

THE GLORIOUS TASK

From depth to height; from height to loftier height
The climber sets his foot and sets his face,
Tracks lingering sunbeams to their resting-place,
And counts the last pulsations of the light.
Strenuous by day and unsurprised by night,
He runs a race with time, and wins the race,
Emptied and stripped of all save only Peace,
Will, Love, a threefold panoply of might.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THERE seem to be two aspects of Nirvana—the potential and the self-conscious, with gradations of unfoldment between. Potential Nirvana is Nirvana asleep, or at the most stirring in its sleep, perchance half dreaming; but only asleep, for there is no death. The lower planes, especially the physical, are dreamlands—Nirvana in potentiality surely, for nowhere is it non-existent. Self-conscious Nirvana is awake, alive, beginning to use its faculties. When fully self-conscious it is completely realised on all its planes, and perhaps on all lower planes, too, in a way which I am not yet

able to understand. In one sense, all is Nirvana. In one sense, there is no unreal. In one sense, all is awake and alive; there is no dreaming. All is living, stirring, striving. In all things is Nirvana unfolding. In the seed lies concealed the flower, in the acorn the oak. Yet in terms of time, breaking the Eternal Now into its constituent Past, Present and Future, there is a process of unfoldment, and we must dream our picture before we can immortalise it on the canvas of the Eternal.

I should like to add that as I look back upon the threshold of Nirvana, before actual entry or unfoldment, I remember a specific preliminary testing—though at the time I did not at all realise it to be such—to ensure that the release from their imprisonment of the wider powers shall as far as possible be attended by no danger either to the individual or to the outer worlds. Such testing seems to be the law of all spiritual transitions, and a successful outcome confers, as it were, the pass-word whereby admission is gained into an inner court of the Temple of Life. My Masonic brethren will recognise the truth of this in reference to Masonry, and many of my readers will be familiar with the qualifications for discipleship and the

fetters associated with the Path to Holiness, the Way of Initiation. Spiritual powers can come only to those who are comparatively certain to use them in the service of the worlds.

It is true that even after their conferment provision is made against a possible misuse, such provision existing, so far as I am aware, even at exalted levels—where it is not, I take it, a question of misuse, but of certain interferences needing the introduction of unusual force. But the wider powers would not be conferred at all without some definite assurance—tempered, of course, by considerations of human frailty. Fortunately for human frailty the opening of the new powers is very gradual; only the lowest subplane coming within range, probably for some considerable time, and even then only by degrees. In the beginning the pressure is of the gentlest, but even the gentlest pressure of Nirvanic consciousness has a tremendous reaction upon all lower bodies, and quite transforms the physical, at all events from the standpoint of the waking consciousness and of the physical relation between the individual and his surroundings. The magic wand of Nirvanic consciousness touches all things and makes them new.

As I have already said, there is, therefore, very great need for calm deliberateness. It would be so easy to allow the pendulum of one's being to overswing to either extreme. Extreme ecstasy, depression, irritability, indifference to outer things, absorption in the inner—all these and other extremes would not be at all difficult to reach, so surging are the forces playing through me. I must use my new powers with great vigour, yet with great restraint. I must take life easily, yet strenuously. Myself a whirlpool of force, I must remain a great centre of peace. I must needs live in the midst of storms, for I belong to storms, being of the band of pioneers. And as one grows, the seaworthiness of one's ship is tested in the alternations of calm and hurricane. We must be seaworthy, built of storm-proof spiritual substance which accepts alike the gentle pressure of the unruffled sea and the furious beatings of storm-lashed waves. I am reminded of Rudyard Kipling :

When, with the gale at her heel, the barque lies
down and recovers—

Rolling through forty degrees, combing the
stars with her tops,

What says the man at the wheel, holding her
straight as she hovers

On the summits of wind-screening seas,
steading her as she drops ?

Behind him the blasts without check from the
Pole to the Tropic pursue him,
Heaving up, heaping high, slamming home, the
surges he must not regard.
Beneath him the crazy wet deck, and all Ocean
on end to undo him,
Above him one desperate sail, thrice-reefed but
still buckling the yard !

Under his hand fleet the spokes and return, to
be held or set free again,
And she bows and makes shift to obey their
behest, till the master-wave comes
And her gunwale goes under in thunder and
smoke, and she chokes in the trough of the
sea again—
Ere she can lift and make way to its crest ;
and he, as he nurses her, hums !

These have so utterly mastered their work
that they work without thinking,
Holding three-fifths of their brain in reserve
for whatever betide.

I have written that I have seemed to absorb
Nirvana more than I seem to have been
absorbed. I have just had an interesting ex-
perience indicating the truth of this, and
suggesting either that there are early tests in
connection with Nirvanic consciousness, or that,
after a certain realisation of its glories, a choice
is offered between remaining in them for an
indefinite period, as one is entitled, and appar-
ently renouncing them.

The experience must be related more or less in the symbolic form in which it came through to the physical brain. Evening after evening I have shaken myself free from the shackles of the lower bodies and I have roamed in splendid regions, climbing from peak to peak of consciousness, standing on great summits of Buddhist and Nirvanic bliss. Morning after morning I return from these cherished pilgrimages and assume again the vestures of what now seems to be a prison life. Plunge again and again I must into these shadow worlds, groping my way about, amidst confusion and clashing sounds of discord and of strife. Great is the strain of continual readjustment, and of the constant contrast between the Peace above and the War beneath. Are there no prospects of release? May I not let the lower worlds go? Have I not done with them? If I may leave them for the time, may I not leave them for all time? True, I am not unhappy, for there is work to do, and the Wardens of the Gates of these three worlds are kindly. But I long for Nirvana unbroken by these constant descents into what seem to be the dungeons of life. I seem so terribly shut off from the wonders I know in the higher worlds, the glorious worlds without, with a sunshine and freedom in such

vivid contrast with the darkness and restriction of these lower spheres.

I am resigned, of course, more than resigned, eager, keen, enthusiastic in my duties in these dungeon places . . . and yet . . . I cannot forget what I have known and have sought feebly to describe to you. And because I cannot forget, I sometimes long the more. It may be a weakness, but if you knew what I know, if you had been where I have been, you, too, might find the weakness excusable, or at least understandable. So, now and then, only now and then, enters the thought: can I not quit these prison-worlds? Is not final release now possible?

Can I not escape my prison? Is release impossible? I would be finally free as all in Nirvana are free. I would forever bask in the eternal sunshine in which they bathe. I too would forever wander in that elysian region, growing and yet so indescribably at rest, so free from all the irksomeness of prison life and discipline. As I thus yearn, suddenly the way of escape opens. From without a whisper comes. "Be it as you will. A friend will open to you for the last time your prison gates. Enter into freedom and return no more." And as I realise the wonderful possibility, there

seems to come upon me the sense of a great expectancy without, of a great welcome waiting for me as I cast off for the last time my—"prison-fetters" is the word that comes, and yet, looking back, I see that these fetters are in reality more vows than fetters, so I almost feel constrained to write prison-vows rather than prison-fetters. But at the time I do not think of them as vows. They seem fetters, and I am impatient to be rid of them. I resolve I will be free, and as I so resolve the barriers fall away, and I find myself issuing forth again into the indescribable glories of unutterable freedom. How beautiful is the welcome of all things to me! How merged in them all I feel—one with all things, one with the myriad happinesses of the myriad lives around me, one with their myriad ecstasies, one with their myriad swayings in utter bliss to those Divine harmonies with which the very air is vocal. I am one with this stupendous Symphony, and add my own ecstasy of gorgeous being to those other ecstasies which seem to ascend like incense to the very throne of God Himself.

I have entered Eternity The past is forever behind me. I am delightfully lost in the rapture of pure being. *I am.* And in these

two words is a fathomless, limitless ocean of bliss supreme. But stay! What is this that I hear? What sounds are these that enter into my joy? Can it be—yes, it is—the call of my prison-world. But what have I now to do with my prison-world? It is behind me, and never need I return to it again. As I realise that I *am* free, so gloriously free, I feel how wonderful it is to know my safety in the power of this freedom. No power from the prison-world can draw me back, for the power of my freedom transcends all other power below. For a moment again I lose myself in rhythmic ecstasy, and then—what is this strange thing which has come upon me? Am I dissatisfied with such a freedom? Am I, it seems impossible, beginning to *want* to return? It is true. Across the infinite spaces I have placed between myself and the far-off prison-world, come to me the cries of those whom prison-fetters still are binding. Can I honourably ignore them? Yes, and yet I cannot ignore them. Let this freedom, this ecstasy, go. I will have none of it while prison-worlds still call—prison-worlds of every kingdom, prison-worlds of the worlds, of systems, of universes. And as I thus resolve, I find myself apparently turning away from my bliss,

and all Nature round me watches my return in solemn stillness, and, I must add for truth's sake though I shrink from writing the words, almost as if in homage.

Back, back, I go, and at last I am at the doors of that prison-world I left so recently, but which seems an eternity away from me. The doors open. I enter. And as I enter, it is as if I heard: "You went to your freedom as was your right, for you have won it. The call of freedom came, and your ears were ready to hear, for you had fulfilled many of those vows the Monad made in the beginning of time, and in their fulfilment their fetters must needs drop away. Yet for many of your comrades from long ago the fetters still remain; and you have done well to heed the cry which came to you across the empty spaces. No bliss, however rapturous, must ever dull the ear to the cry of suffering and need, rather must it make the ear more sensitive, and the feet more speedy to succour."

And so I find myself back in the old routine of prison-life, and am content, for I am needed where I am. But what is this change which has come about? Surely I am not still in prison? Is there a mistake? Have I left the cry unheeded? I look around me. The age-old

prison-world is round me. Yet *I* am different. I have not returned alone. Something glorious has returned with me, and in its magic the imprisonment seems no imprisonment. It is imprisonment, and yet it is not. Slowly upon me dawns the fact that while the form is there, the life has become free. I dwell a free man in the form. No longer am I bound upon it. No longer need I return to it life after life its slave, though I may return its master. Form has become the servant of my life. Another miracle of transubstantiation, for within the forms freedom has been substituted for necessity. Have I not brought Nirvana back with me? Have not the swaying ecstasies of Divinity-attuned rhythm entered into my very being, thus abiding with me even in the prison-worlds? All I thought I must leave is with me forever. There is no loss in renunciation, only gain. There is no loss in sacrifice, only gain. And this gain is the supreme gain of gains—the gain of added Unity, and of the Love, the Wisdom and the Power which are its three-fold aspect.

As I wake back in this prison-world, these words ring through me; “Take with you into your old home the gifts of the new. Take Nirvana back with you as you have experienced

it, and live in it in as deep fulfilment within all prison-worlds as you have lived in it in so great an ecstasy without. In reality there is no Nirvana *to take back*, you have but to realise Nirvana where you are, for it is everywhere and always. Nirvana is no place, but a Truth—the glorious Reality in the Unreal, the great Eternal in all Time, the mighty Life in every form. Nirvana is the birthright and inheritance of all. Having entered into it yourself, inspire others to seek it by becoming a living reflection of its splendid Peace.”

ENVOI

IF he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true ; and rend
Desire from where it clings with bleeding
 roots,
Till love of life have end :

He—dying—leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and
 quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and
 near,
So that fruits follow it.

No need hath such to live as ye name life ;
That which began in him when he began
Is finished : he hath wrought the purpose
 through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and
 woes
Invade his safe eternal peace ; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto Nirvana. He is one with Life,
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
OM, MANI PADME, OM ! the Dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea !

The Light of Asia.

APPENDIX A

I A NOTE BY DR. BESANT ON NIRVANA

FROM AN ADDRESS TO THE BRAHMAVIDYA
ASHRAMA ON "PHILOSOPHY, OR GOD
MANIFESTING AS UNDERSTANDING "

AND this leads me to say one word which, I think, you will have to keep as a steady thought right through, in all the questions that you meet in the various philosophies as to the meaning of "absorption," the Nirvana of the Buddhist, and the various ideas of Moksha, the true Nirvana of the Hindu. In all of these, if you wish to have the nearest approach to the truth that human limited intelligence and consciousness can gain, you must not think of what is called the drop merging in the ocean, that is, of the drop disappearing, which is the idea that the western student of eastern Philosophy usually adopts. What you have to think of (though it seems a contradiction) is the drop expanding into the ocean, and still keeping its own centre. It would not be much use building up individuality if, at the end, all was to be thrown away, and the individual was to be the same on

returning to "the bosom of the Father," as when he came from it. That is not the view which comes from an increasing knowledge of the expansions of consciousness, which is, after all, all that we have to guide us in our own experience. If you take the consciousness of the Higher Ego, you have a very strongly marked Individuality, a very distinct separating body—using that word for a kind of permanent enclosure of matter in which resides a certain stage of consciousness, which is essentially the I developing its I-ness, intensifying that sense of the I, by contrast with the universe around, in which the I does not find that its own consciousness is working. He is looking at it from outside, not from within it, and so he feels intensely the sharp separation between the I and the Not-I. But when the I-ness drops his causal body, his material from the higher mental plane, and passes on into the buddhic, there is an immense expansion of consciousness, but there is no loss of that centre; he expands so as to include any of the consciousnesses which are acting on that plane. In a sense, he becomes all of them, and yet he never loses the sense of his own centre. He identifies himself with another with a closeness of identity that we know nothing of below that plane. But still there is the subtle memory of past experiences which gives it a little different hue, or colour, or fragrance, or whatever delicate word you can use to symbolise an existence which is almost impalpable and yet that remains, colouring, as it were, the buddhic consciousness. There is that tremendous expansion;

and if, when you are studying the various philosophies, you keep that in mind, you will find every now and then a phrase which becomes intelligible when you have that thought in your mind. In Plotinus, you will find a wonderful description of buddhic consciousness, in which he speaks of the Star which is itself and all the other Stars, as the striking fact of what we should now call the buddhic body—or rather, the buddhic sheath, to make a distinction between the enclosure and the appropriation of matter which does not separate. The buddhic sheath is a radiating Star, not an enclosure. If you see a person in the buddhic body on the buddhic plane, you do not see an enclosure; you see a Star radiating out in all directions, whose rays pierce your consciousness so that you feel it to be a part of yourself, and yet not quite. It is almost impossible, except by a series of contradictions, to describe states of consciousness to which our language does not adapt itself. Of course, in Sanskrit, you get an enormously more developed form of language, from the philosophical standpoint, than in English; yet in trying to make people understand, you must use a language that they will understand, and Sanskrit is known by comparatively few people in the West. We are rather trying to eliminate the Sanskrit terms without loss of accuracy. The experience of the buddhic plane is not translatable into words down here but you do get indications of it, and they are generally called (when people read of them with no realisation of what they mean) “obscure,”

“vague,” “indeterminate,” etc But it is quite clear, and not vague to anyone who touches it It is one of the great facts of consciousness that you can never understand a stage which you have not reached You cannot understand consciousness by looking at it from outside I was answering a letter yesterday in which there was the question, “Why did God make the universe?” I suggested that there were many possible reasons, but that a kitten cannot understand why a man spends his time reading a book instead of running after a leaf on the ground, because the consciousness of the kitten is not developed enough to read a book; and we are all nearer to the kitten than to Ishvara in one sense, in our comprehension of His nature. It is quite true that

Closer is He than breathing

Nearer than hands and feet;

but you have to stretch your consciousness to accept contradictions

On the other hand, when the consciousness begins to dawn, as it has to dawn, through the help of some one greater than yourself (otherwise it would shatter you), when, enveloped in the consciousness of another, you may touch the next plane, then the sense of absolute unity comes upon you, and you may say that the difference does disappear, but it disappears by expansion and not by extinguishment That is why I said that, if you would think of the drop expanding into the ocean and sharing the consciousness of the ocean, you would have a truer idea of Nirvana, which so

many western writers call annihilation, though it is the fulness of Life

I said the consciousness would be shattered. If you think for a moment of films of matter, however fine they may be, you will find that they have a certain limit of vibration, and that they can answer to and reproduce certain other limits of vibration. You also find that, if you take a very much more rapid rate of vibration, you break the enclosure, shatter it to pieces. That is true of all aggregations of matter, so far as we know them. There is a limit beyond which they cannot respond, and then they are simply shattered. That would be the effect if you were suddenly to find yourselves on the Nirvanic plane, if not prepared for it. You would simply have to burst, like a bubble vanishing. It is a very long job to build it again, the film of the bubble. Therefore people are prevented from going into it, unless it may happen that persons may be taken into it, to show them certain occurrences, certain truths, and then they are shielded, just as a diving dress is given to the man who goes into water. Protective sheaths are possible all the way up.

There is, in the Buddhist Philosophy, a wonderful sentence of the Lord Gautama Buddha, where He is striving to indicate in human language something that would be intelligible about the condition of Nirvana. You find it in the Chinese translation of the Dhammapada, and the Chinese edition has been translated into English in the series of books known as "Trubner's Series". He puts it there

that, unless there was Nirvana, there could be nothing; and He uses various phrases in order to indicate what He means, taking the uncreated and then connecting with it the created; taking the Real and then connecting with it the unreal. He sums it up by saying that Nirvana is, and that if it were not, naught else could be. That is an attempt (if one may call it so with all reverence) to say what cannot be said. It implies that unless there existed the Uncreate, the Invisible and the Real, we could not have a universe at all. You have there, then, the indication that Nirvana is a plenum, not a void. That idea should be fundamentally fixed in your mind, in your study of every great system of Philosophy. So often the expressions used may seem to indicate a void. Hence the western idea of annihilation. If you think of it as fulness, you will realise that the consciousness expands more and more, without losing utterly the sense of identity; if you could think of a centre of a circle without a circumference, you would glimpse the truth.

II. FROM "THE MASTERS AND THE PATH"

BY THE RIGHT REV. C. W. LEADBEATER

FOR the Arhat henceforth the consciousness of the buddhic plane is his while still in the physical body, and when he leaves that body in sleep or

trance, he passes at once into the unutterable glory of the nirvanic plane. At his Initiation he must have at least one glimpse of that nirvanic consciousness, just as at the First Initiation there must be a momentary experience of the buddhic, and now his daily effort will be to reach further and further up into the nirvanic plane. It is a task of prodigious difficulty, but gradually he will find himself able to work upwards into that ineffable splendour.

The entry into it is utterly bewildering, and it brings as its first sensation an intense vividness of life, surprising even to him who is familiar with the buddhic plane. This surprise has been his before, though in a lesser measure, whenever he mounted for the first time from one plane to another. Even when we rise first in full and clear consciousness from the physical plane to the astral, we find the new life to be so much wider than any that we have hitherto known that we exclaim:

I thought I knew what life was, but I have never known before!" When we pass into the mental plane, we find the same feeling redoubled; the astral was wonderful, but it was nothing to the mental world. When we pass into the higher mental plane, again we have the same experience. At every step the same surprise comes over again, and no thought beforehand can prepare one for it, because it is always far more stupendous than anything that we can imagine, and life on all those higher planes is an intensity of bliss for which no words exist

European Orientalists have translated nirvana as annihilation, because the word means "blown out," as the light of a candle is extinguished by a breath. Nothing could be a more complete antithesis of the truth. Certainly it is the annihilation of all that down here we know as man, because there he is no longer man, but God in mafi, a God among other Gods, though less than They.

Try to imagine the whole universe filled with and consisting of an immense torrent of living light, the whole moving, moving onward, without relativity, a restless onward sweep of a vast sea of light, light with a purpose, if that is comprehensible, tremendously concentrated, but absolutely without strain or effort—words fail. At first we feel nothing but the bliss of it, and see nothing but the intensity of the light; but gradually we begin to realise that even in this dazzling brightness there are brighter spots (nuclei, as it were) through which the light obtains a new quality that enables it to become perceptible on lower planes, whose inhabitants without this aid would be altogether beneath the possibility of sensing its effulgence. Then by degrees we begin to realise that these subsidiary suns are the Great Ones, the Planetary Spirits, Great Angels, Karmic Deities, Dhyan Chohans, Buddhas, Christs and Masters, and many others who are to us not even names, and that through Them the light and life are flowing down to the lower planes.

Little by little, as we become more accustomed to this marvellous reality, we begin to see that

we are one with Them, though far below the summit of Their splendour, part of the One that dwells somehow in Them all, and also in every point of space between; and that we ourselves are also a focus, and through us at our much lower level the light and life are flowing to those who are still further away (not from it, for all are part of it and there is nothing else anywhere, but) from the realisation of it, the comprehension and experience of it.

Madame Blavatsky often spoke of that consciousness as having its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere, a profoundly suggestive sentence, attributed variously to Pascal, Cardinal de Cusa and the *Zohar*, but belonging by right to the Books of Hermes. Far indeed from annihilation is such consciousness; the Initiate reaching it has not in the least lost the sense that he is himself; his memory is perfectly continuous; he is the same man, yet all this as well, and now indeed he can say. "I am I," knowing what "I" really means. It may sound strange, but it is true. No words that we can use can give even the least idea of such an experience as that, for all with which our minds are acquainted has long ago disappeared before that level is attained. There is, of course, even at that level, a sheath of some sort for the Spirit, impossible to describe, for in one sense it seems as though it were an atom and yet in another it seems to be the whole plane. The man feels as if he were everywhere, but could focus anywhere within himself, and

wherever for a moment the outpouring of force diminishes, that is for him a body.

The man who has once realised that marvellous unity can never forget it, can never be quite as he was before ; for however deeply he may veil himself in lower vehicles in order to help and save others, however closely he may be bound to the cross of matter, cribbed, cabined and confined, he can never forget that his eyes have seen the King in His Beauty, that he has beheld the land which is very far off—very far off, yet very near, within us all the time if we could only see it, because to reach nirvana we need not go away to some far-distant heaven, but only open our consciousness to its glory. As the Lord Buddha said long ago . “ Do not complain and cry and pray, but open your eyes and see ; for the light is all about you, and it is so wonderful, so beautiful, so far beyond anything that men have ever dreamed of or prayed for, and it is for ever and for ever ”

APPENDIX B

AN EXTRACT FROM

“THE ANCIENT WISDOM”

BY ANNIE BESANT

THE fifth plane, the Nirvanic, is the plane of the highest human aspect of the God within us, and this aspect is named by Theosophists Atma, or the Self. It is the plane of pure existence, of divine powers in their fullest manifestation in our fivefold universe—what lies beyond on the sixth and seventh planes is hidden in the unimaginable light of God. This Atmic, or Nirvanic, consciousness, the consciousness belonging to life on the fifth plane, is the consciousness attained by those lofty Ones, the first fruits of humanity, who have already completed the cycle of human evolution, and who are called Masters. They have solved in Themselves the problem of uniting the essence of individuality with non-separateness, and live, immortal Intelligences, perfect in wisdom, in bliss, in power.

When the human Monad comes forth from the Logos, it is as though from the luminous ocean of Atma a tiny thread of light was separated off from the rest by a film of buddhic matter, and from this

hung a spark which becomes enclosed in an egg-like casing of matter belonging to the formless levels of the mental plane. "The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat." As evolution proceeds, this luminous egg grows larger and more opalescent and the tiny thread becomes a wider and wider channel through which more and more of the atmic life pours down. Finally, they merge—the third with the second, and the twain with the first, as flame merges with flame and no separation can be seen.

The evolution on the fourth and fifth planes belongs to a future period of our race, but those who choose the harder path of swifter progress may tread it even now, as will be explained later. On that path the bliss-body is quickly evolved, and a man begins to enjoy the consciousness of that loftier region, and knows the bliss which comes from the absence of separative barriers, the wisdom which flows in when the limits of the intellect are transcended. Then is the wheel escaped from, which binds the soul in the lower worlds, and then is the first foretaste of the liberty which is found perfected on the Nirvanic plane.

The Nirvanic consciousness is the antithesis of annihilation; it is existence raised to a vividness and intensity inconceivable to those who know only the life of the senses and the mind. As the farthing rushlight to the splendour of the sun at noon, so is the earth-bound consciousness to the Nirvanic, and to regard it as annihilation because the limits of the earthly consciousness have

vanished, is as though a man, knowing only the rushlight, should say that light could not exist without a wick immersed in tallow. That Nirvana IS has been borne witness to in the past in the Scriptures of the world by Those who enjoy it and live its glorious life, and is still borne witness to by others of our race who have climbed that lofty ladder of perfected humanity, and who remain in touch with earth that the feet of our ascending race may mount its rungs unfalteringly.

In Nirvana dwell the mighty Beings who accomplished Their own human evolution in past universes, and who came forth with the Logos when He manifested Himself to bring this universe into existence. They are His ministers in the administration of the worlds, the perfect agents of His will. The Lords of all the Hierarchies of the Gods and lower ministrants that we have seen working on the lower planes have here Their abiding-place, for Nirvana is the heart of the universe, whence all its life-currents proceed. Hence the Great Breath comes forth, the life of all, and thither it is indrawn when the universe has reached its term. There is the Beatific Vision for which mystics long, there the unveiled Glory, the Supreme Goal

APPENDIX C

AN EXTRACT FROM "THE WISDOM OF THE ARYAS "

BY ANANDA M, A BUDDHIST MONK

LASTLY, mention has been made, during this and other essays of this series, of Nirvana, that Goal of Life towards which the Buddhist aspires, and unto which, the Master taught us, all life is surely tending; and it will be fitting if the whole series should close with some attempt to set forth the meaning Buddhists attach to that term. The literal meaning of the word is simply *blown out*—extinguished as is the flame of a lamp when it has been blown out; but you who have so far followed what has been said concerning it will understand how great has been the error of those who have expounded it as simply tantamount to sheer annihilation. Annihilation it is indeed in one sense—the annihilation of Desire, of Passion, of Self-delusion. But when we come to try to expound its meaning in terms other than negative, we are met with an insurmountable difficulty; that, namely, all our positive definitions must necessarily be in terms of the life we know, in terms of human

thought; and here we speak of That which is *Beyond* all Life, the very Goal towards which all Life is tending.

Perhaps the best physical analogy (it may, indeed, be something deeper than a mere analogy) to the Buddhist concept of the whole life-process may be drawn from that new science of this present century, which has so vividly illumined many another erstwhile darkened chamber of our human minds—the science of radio-activity. For that science tells us how certain of the elementary atoms are steadily changing into other atoms; losing, in the act of it, some portion of their mass, which appears in the form of an immense—an incredibly vast—outpouring of energy. Now the Buddhist view of the universe at large is exactly parallel; it teaches that life—using the term here in its restricted sense as the highest sort of life—consists of a vast number of entities, passing, indeed, from one state of life into another, but still, so far as what we may term *spiritual descent* is concerned, each the same bundle of life-forces in all these manifold manifestations. From time to time a given individual finds—whether by his own unaided effort, or, more frequently by far, as the result of following the Teaching of a Buddha—a spiritual Sun of this mental, conscious world—that inner, hidden mental Path which leads out of Life's dreaming to the Truth which lies beyond. And, just as the radio-active atom, in disintegrating, ceases, so far at least as part of it is concerned, to be matter at all, becomes, as it were transmuted

into force, thus adding to the heat or other form of energy in the material universe ; so does a part, at least, of what had been a human being, pass into a different condition—or, to speak more correctly, pass beyond conditioning altogether, even as part of the physical atom passes into a non-material energy

There are even closer parallelisms between the two concepts—when we come to examine these in detail—facts relating to the *grouping* of the transition,—of man to Arhatship or of atom to disintegration,—into very definite stages ; and yet others relating to the time-law according to which the atomic disintegration occurs. These details, however, we must leave aside. Here it can only be said that to the instructed Buddhist, Nirvana stands for the Ultimate, the Beyond, and the Goal of Life—a State so utterly different from this conditioned ever-changing being of the Self-dream that we know as to lie not only quite Beyond all naming and describing, but far past even Thought itself.

And yet—and herein lies the wonder and the greatness of this Wisdom of the Aryas, won by the Greatest of the Aryans for the enfranchisement of man from all his self-wrought bondages—this Glory utterly beyond all grasp of thought, this Peace that is the very purpose of all strife-involving being, lies nearer to us than our nearest consciousness, even as, to him who rightly understands, it is dearer than the dearest hope that we can frame. Past all the glory of the moon and sun, still infinitely far

above the starry heights of conscious being sublimated to its ultimate ; beyond the infinite abysses of that all-embracing Æther wherein these universes have their bourneless home ;—illimitably far remote above the utmost altitudes where Thought, with vainly-beating wings, falls like some lost bird that had aspired till the thin air no longer could support it ;—*still* it dwells higher, higher than the very thought we now are thinking, higher than the consciousness that, for the transitory moment, is what truly can be termed ourselves

Not through successive subtilisations of the false idea of Selfhood, then ; not through those higher States of Being which we have spoken of as the successive *Jhanas*—the States of Ecstasy—lies the Ancient Way the Teacher found ; but in the very humblest, simplest, and most intimate of all directions that the heart of man can turn and travel in. Just as the Wisdom-Being turned His back on all the glories of the world , on all false Mara's promise of world-grasping domination ; on all the complex grandeurs of His court-life to become a beggar—humblest and lowliest of human creatures , living in the crudest, simplest, most immediate way—just as He wrought that Great Renunciation only that He might find the Way that *all* might follow to the Peace—so does the portal of the Path stand wide for all of us just only when—though it be but for a moment—*we forget our Self, and live, aspire and work for Life at large* If we should draw, as on a chart, a diagram of Life in all its countless renderings, setting here but the dim germ-consciousness

of the mineral, there the dawn of organised life in the world of flowers and plants; then the animal; then the human and self-conscious life we know; and yet beyond these those loftier altitudes of Being attained through the High Ecstasies, the *Jhanas*; the worlds of the Angels and the Gods, and, yet beyond these, the highest, holiest State whereof the Saints and Sages of old time have told—the Bodiless, Formless Ones in their highest Heaven of Pure Ideation; then, *nowhere in all that chart*; and nowhere beyond it in its own plane, could we extend it even to infinity—would lie the place that might be assigned to the abode, the dwelling of Nirvana, and—so far as we can state in words at all that all-pervading intimacy of it—that direction lies, for our own conscious life, *where* there is no more Self; just as in our analogy its Abode would be *where there is no more plane* of that conditioned chart.

And, indeed, we are told in our Teaching that it is just this very human life we now are living in[^] which alone that high Path which leads to it may be *entered*; though it may be *completed* (where it takes more than one life, as is said to be most usual) in the higher Heavenly Realms. It is explained that in the states of life below the human—in the animal world, the world of ghosts, and so forth—there is ever too much of suffering, too much of haunting fear for Self, for the being to be able to take what we have seen is an essential step, namely, the Right Concentration of the mind. Otherwise put, there is too little *mind*, too dim a

consciousness, in those lowly states of life for concentration to be possible. Whilst on the other hand, we learn, there in the Heavenly Realms beyond the human state, so vast is the extension of consciousness in both space and time that a being born into such a life cannot grasp the truth of Suffering; *his own* life is so merged in ecstasy, whether of sense or of the Pure Intelligence, that he cannot understand how Suffering, how Transiency, can be true; and—because infinitely subtler—his own conception of the Self within him is so far more potent and more real-seeming that he cannot grasp that in that utter-real-seeming Selfhood naught but Delusion dwells.

So it is *here* and *now*—not in some imagined future or in some state indefinitely higher than the human life—that, for the Buddhist, lies the Great Opportunity; here in this human life which sometimes seems so petty and so mean and sordid, yet which even the high and holy Gods might envy, could they but understand!

This little human life—so short, so empty-seeming of high hopefulness—is yet the Gate of Opportunity for all the myriad beings in all Life's countless realms; the very portal of the Path to Liberation and to Peace! So taught the Greatest of the genius-gifted Aryan Race—He whom we love to term the Wisest, and, above all, the Most Compassionate of men. Can you wonder that we smile, then, when those who have not understood His Teaching speak of it as a gloomy pessimism? Can you wonder that we love and reverence Him,

adoring the very memory of that great Life as men of other creeds adore their holiest Gods ?

Many there are, here in these western lands to-day, to whom this old-time Wisdom of the Aryas comes—despite all the insularity of their upbringing—with a strange stirring of the deeps of consciousness,—as if in answer to some but half-remembered Voice, echoing through the mind's dim caverns out of the gulf of immemorial years. Such, we would say, have heard and have a little understood its Message in old lives foregone ; have caught, through it, some vision of the Truth that reigns behind this darkling mystery of life ;—even it may be, have drawn nigh, through it, to that high Portal of the Path that leads to Liberation. That this is so we know from long experience ; and, indeed, once one admits and understands the operation of the Law of Life, of Karma, it becomes clear that some such a condition must prevail. Forever the Wheel of Life in its unceasing movement brings each creature new conditionings ; yet these are ever sequent in the ultimate ; where the old life breaks off, there the new birth reintegrates its bygone state. So, since Aryan India in its great Buddhist phase stood in the forefront of the human progress then extant, we should expect that many who formed part of that great civilisation would at this time, when the centre of progress and of civilisation has shifted to the west, take birth in western lands

For such these essays have been written—ever in the hope that, despite their imperfections,

sufficient of the spirit of Buddhism may yet shine through them to stir the sleeping memories of life once more Through eighty generations of mankind; through all the changing circumstances of time and racial development, that spirit, that essence of the Teaching of the Greatest of Humanity has been passed on from heart to living heart,—all-conquering And surely the western world, amidst this present darkness of its religious life, may well find in this ancient Truth some answer to its deepest problems; some solace for the sorrows and the nescience of life ?

Selfless to live and selfless die—seeking for no reward, but only service of the greater life; hoping for no high heaven, for no æonian bliss, but only to grow selfless every day—such is the lesson that pervades alike the Master's life, the Master's Teaching—thereby may Peace come to all life at last!

APPENDIX D

I. THE STAFF

FROM "MAN WHENCE, HOW AND WHITHER"

BY ANNIE BESANT AND C. W. LEADBEATER

WHEN the Human Kingdom is traversed, and man stands on the threshold of His superhuman life, a liberated Spirit, seven paths open before Him for His choosing: He may enter into the blissful omniscience and omnipotence of Nirvana, with activities far beyond our knowing, to become, perchance, in some future world an Avatara, or divine Incarnation; this is sometimes called "taking the Dharmakaya vesture". He may enter on the "Spiritual Period"—a phrase covering unknown meanings, among them probably that of "taking the Sambhogakaya vesture". He may become part of that treasure-house of spiritual forces on which the Agents of the Logos draw for Their work, "taking the Nirmanakaya vesture". He may remain a member of the Occult Hierarchy which rules and guards the world in which He has reached perfection. He may pass on to the next Chain, to aid in building up its forms. He may enter the splendid Angel or Deva Evolution. He

may give Himself to the immediate service of the Logos, to be used by Him in any part of the Solar System, His Servant and Messenger, who lives but to carry out His will and do His work over the whole of the system which He rules. As a General has his staff, the members of which carry his messages to any part of the field, so are These the Staff of Him Who commands all, "Ministers of His that do His pleasure." This seems to be considered a very hard Path, perhaps the greatest sacrifice open to the Adept, and is therefore regarded as carrying with it great distinction. A member of the General Staff has no physical body, but makes one for Himself by Kriyashakti—the "power to make"—of the matter of the globe to which He is sent. The Staff contains Beings at very different levels, from that of Arhatship upwards.

II. THE SERVERS

I REFER my readers to the exhaustive account given of these workers in "The Lives of Alcyone" by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, in the "Foreword." This "Foreword" may also be found in *The Theosophist*, September, 1913.

APPENDIX E

THE AUSTRALIAN SECTION: A VISION

BY G. S. ARUNDALE

LET us look for a while into the future of our Australian Section. I see the Section enormously more influential, not so much because of its increased membership, but because of the far greater extent to which it practises the Theosophy which beforehand it had more preached than practised.

I see the Section as the real heart of Australia—the link between Australia and Those who are the Heart of the world. I see that the majority of the members recognise this fact, and dedicate themselves accordingly. I see the Section as a kind of smaller Nation within the Australian Nation. The Australian National standard is kept, is set, by members of the Australian Section of the Theosophical Society. In greater or less degree the people of Australia conform to this standard, which is finely maintained by the majority of the members, and is continually exercising, by its very existence, a pressure upon the people of Australia, so that conformity to it grows steadily though slowly.

I see membership of the Section becoming a privilege, a mark of respect, rather than a matter for ridicule or disapproval as it was in the middle of the twentieth century. People in the outside world do not always want to join the Society, for it involves very strenuous, though very joyous, living, but they recognise the valuable contribution members make to the National uplift. They also recognise the fact that members of the Society do not live for themselves, but for those around them, and that their opinions and activities are always constructive, never separative.

I see that the Section forms part of the heart of that great League of Nations which today we call the British Empire. The Empire evidently becomes a League of Nations, united not merely for the common good of its constituent parts, but equally, perhaps more, to help to insure the peace and prosperity of the world. Each Section of the Society represents its own particular country in the smaller League of Nations, itself the heart of the larger League, which is the Society as a whole. Each Section, too, sets an example of perfect harmonisation with the interests of the whole of which it is a part. The League of Nations which we call the Empire thus becomes a unity which no individual divergence of ideals is able to break, for at the heart of the League is a Universal Brotherhood begun. The Theosophical Society is a world in itself, a living example to the larger world of the future which awaits it.

The greatest safeguard against wars, quarrels and all other kinds of disruptive forces is the Theosophical Society. The Society, in certain respects at all events, strongly influences public opinion, and becomes so well organised, so harmonious, that it inevitably exercises the power which order ever has over disorder. That against which the Society unitedly stands, the world finds it increasingly difficult to do

How does this come about? Not by force. The Society does not believe in force, even if it had the force to wield, which it has not. But by compelling example. The Society, every individual member, is living Theosophy, living it in the everyday things of life. Theosophists live differently. They live without fear. They live peacefully. They live far more happily. They live far more healthily.

They seem to have in great measure eradicated disease because they know how to live. First, they do not live **at the expense of others**. They do not live on the pain of others, whether human or sub-human. They eat pure things, and find deliciousness in grace, in purity and in simplicity, not in complexity and coarseness. Second, they live hygienically. Their clothes, their homes, all their arrangements for the care of the body, are designed to this end. And they have learned that hygienic living does not merely mean pure air, the right values of food, and so on, it means also artistic and rhythmic living, graceful living. This is equally indispensable.

I see, too, that the Theosophists of this period—it is not, perhaps, so very far off—have ceased to worry and to be anxious, have to a large extent done away with irritability. Anger and hatred have, of course, entirely disappeared. So have suspicion and distrust. The sexual problem has also been solved, partly by a clear understanding of sex and its divine purpose, partly by the recognition of marriage and maternity as wonderful Sacraments. The Theosophists of this period are deeply reverent while at the same time delightfully light-hearted.

I see the Lodges of today gradually becoming communities. They are communities at the time of which I write. Little by little, families congenial to each other have either built or taken houses close together on the outskirts of the towns, and community living begins, without the loss of individuality. More and more, that which can advantageously be done in common is done in common, with the result that living becomes cheaper, and much more time becomes available for the larger work.

In some cases, a number of families live together in a house specially built for the purpose—a kind of monastery without any of the disadvantages or restrictions, and giving ample opportunity for individual development, as well as, within reason, for the satisfaction of individual idiosyncrasies. In other cases, there is a kind of village community, a group of houses or cottages, self-contained, a kind of Garden City on a small scale. I see that these

communities specially concern themselves with education and with amusements I could write at length on the educational side, but it must suffice to say that the Theosophical education given in the times of which I write is extraordinarily practical, is far more by doing than by learning, enables the young people to understand the Laws of Life and how to use them, and certainly makes for a very great efficiency. These Theosophical young people are much more markedly different from other young people than those of today. Very practical, very thorough in everything, never satisfied unless they get to the root of things, always insisting on finding out things for themselves, deeply reverent of the Real, equally impatient of the unreal, of sham, of hypocrisy, of pretence, reliable, beautifully courteous to all, tender, understanding. It is obviously so beautiful to be young that those who are no longer young almost begin to be impatient for youth again. I can hear some of them saying, "Ah! well, in a short time I shall have a young body once more." Death thus comes to mean but exchange, the giving up of old clothes for new. Young people in these later times are so very delightful. They make life so sparkling. Old people never feel "out of things," partly because the young share with them their bright lives, and partly because they have their own "things" to do, things appropriate to age, things only age can do, and which need to be done.

I thus see every Lodge and every Centre a community, or a number of communities. These

communities almost become places of pilgrimage for the people round. People gradually become attracted to the Science whose votaries are so obviously happy, and equally obviously "all there". People see that these Theosophists are no mere talkers and dreamers, but are the best among the citizens, patriotic, loyal, and always ready both to help good causes and to fight bad ones. There are no weaklings, whether in body or in mind, among these Theosophists. Straight, clear, strenuous, efficient, healthy, they all of them are. Thus, as people see the effect of belief in brotherhood, in karma, in reincarnation, and so on, they begin to turn to these beliefs, very rightly holding that there must be something in theories which produce such results, and which for most of the Theosophists do not seem to be mere theories, but rather experienced facts. Theories which make better people need looking into. And the result is that by degrees vegetarianism, for example, becomes widespread, and in all spheres of life begins a great renaissance of Reality.

I see such beautiful libraries in these communities, so up to date, not so much with Theosophical literature, although each community has its full complement of standard Theosophical works, but with the latest works of outer world thinkers in religion, politics, philosophy, sociology, science, art, literature, education, etc. These communities are nothing if not thorough, and being in advance of the world in certain directions they take good care to be abreast of the world's most eminent

thinkers and workers in all departments Wireless keeps them in constant touch with events all over the world, just as the world, as well as all Theosophical communities in every part of the world, receives wireless news from the principal Theosophical communities everywhere

I must specially stress the beautiful colour and sound music these communities have developed in wonderful degree, music far more subtle than that which the outer world has reached. I also notice the simplicity and dignity of the furnishing of the rooms, and the beautiful homage paid to greatness in the inspiring pictures of the world's great deeds and the world's great doers of them, as also pictures of places of great historic and spiritual interest.

The keynote of every community is service. All that is done is done to that end Service is the dominant objective of all community activity Every member of the community lives and grows in an atmosphere of joyous and efficient service In all emergencies, National or local, Theosophists are active with trained capacity and tireless energy. They are the first people upon whom reliance is placed in all difficulties, for they know how to apply the healing balm of scientific brotherhood to all wounds in the body politic In the outer world, for the most part, are the world's great scientists, poets, statesmen, philosophers, industrialists, but within the Theosophical Society are the world's great seers and prophets, and those who lead the way in the application of brotherhood to life in all its varied aspects Thus does the

Theosophical Society become a golden chain of Brotherhood encircling and uniting the world.

Of course, all this is immensely hastened by the life of the Christ in the world. Many recognise Him. Some do not. But His example, and above all His immensely potent insistence on the Real, brushing aside conventionalities, conveniences, superstitions, shams, hypocrisies, though at first repellent to the many who had been living on all these, in many cases no doubt unconsciously, gradually commands the attention Truth ever ultimately compels when garbed in the Form of the world's great mirror of Truth—the Christ.

It is impossible for me to find words to express the marvellous benediction of the Christ's immediate Presence. Indeed does He revolutionise, but as He revolutionises He heals. From all that He touches drops away the unreal, and the world grows bright in the renewal of its youth. The dust of ages is swept away, the encrustations of centuries disappear, and life stands once more revealed in all its simplicity, in all its beauty, in all its power and purpose. How foolish are those who deny Him! How sad for them! Yet the time will come for them, too, to recognise a Saviour, for Saviours of the world will come again and again until none are left to deny, until all rejoice. Perchance we who hope to recognise Him in the near future have denied aforetime. Our turn has come to recognise—theirs perhaps not yet.

Do you wonder, with so glorious a vision before my eyes, that I become eager for the vision to

descend into the outer world? I know it is on the threshold. I have written of the vision as it is when partly realised, but I know that its beginnings are now. I know that every member of our Society—for though I write of Australia, the vision is for all countries—should without delay begin to turn his eyes towards the Real. I know that every member should raise his anchor from the unreal and sail away into the East, the land of the Real.

How well it would be if even from now every member eagerly began to plan ways and means of entering more quickly into our Theosophic inheritance, if every member made up his mind to live quite definitely more unto brotherhood, less unto self! How well it would be if every member determined to make Theosophy a truly living force in his life, far more in the daily routine, in the daily toil, in the daily cares and troubles, even than in his utterances, so that his utterances are fortified by their harmonisation with his daily life! How wonderful it would be if we could live Theosophy as well as preach it! Many are trying to do this already, I know, but it needs to be done by us all, and far more fully. We must believe, really believe, in Theosophy, so that as time goes on it becomes impossible to live otherwise than Theosophically, so that we become Theosophists, not merely members of the Theosophical Society.

How well it would be if all over Australia—and everywhere else, too, of course—members, groups of members, groups of families, Centres, Lodges,

seriously began to discuss ways and means of making brotherhood more practical among themselves, discussed schemes of community living, concerted measures for doing as much together as possible, went into the possibilities of combining in certain activities to make living cheaper, to make leisure more enjoyable and purposeful, to pool individual resources in pursuit of common happiness and greater efficiency! Why cannot Lodges and Centres go into all these questions to see what can be done? At the least, why cannot certain families and friends combine to live much more together, to work much more together, to play much more together? Is it not time for us to hustle, and to make our nuclei of the Universal Brotherhood much more real than they are?

The result will be, because of the more brotherly living, a much more potent and effective brotherhood activity in the outer world. To set the Nation-house in order, or the world-house, or the town or city-house, we must set our Lodge or Centre-house in order, as well as our body-house, too, of course. We shall in this way become much more strenuous and efficient than before. We shall have much more time to participate in all kinds of brotherhood activity in the outer world. Though we may live on the outskirts of the town, and grow very self-contained, we shall not become in the least degree exclusive or aloof. On the contrary, the increased sense of brotherhood will compel us to regard our community life merely as a centre from

which we radiate our vitality to the farthest limits of our respective circumferences. We shall take part in all the life of our surroundings as we have never taken part in it before. We shall have our centres in our town or city, veritable hives of brotherhood industry, places of meeting, centres for organisation, for industrial, commercial, political, educational, social and religious activities of all kinds. These centres will gradually be recognised as centres of truly practical idealism. We shall show the world how to live, how really to live, how to be full of life, of true life, in every sphere—in the home, in business, in the duties of citizenship, in leisure.

Let us begin, individually and in groups, to think about all these things **now**. Let us begin to think about them with definite intention to achieve them. Let us not think of them as unattainable. They **are** attainable. They are about to come. If we have the will, we must assuredly find the way. Difficulties? Of course. But as we encounter the difficulties, let us discover ways and means of overcoming them. Under no circumstances must we give up simply because we encounter difficulties and obstacles. These are things to be got **over**, or **under**, or **round**. In some cases, indeed, they may be imaginary, so that with a little light-heartedness and self-confidence we may go **through** them.

I make it a personal request that members of the Australian Section begin to discuss ways and means. I ask them to consider these things at members' meetings in a spirit of constructive

criticism, looking for the way to them. The way is there. The way for every Lodge and Centre is there. It only has to be sought persistently. Of course, it means an upsetting of conventional jog-trot living. But that is exactly what we have to do. Let every member impose this penance upon himself—not to throw cold water on the discussion or on any earnest endeavour to find the way. It is so easy to throw cold water, to find difficulties. Anyone can do this. It requires little intelligence, and is the way of the world, and so the line of most easy going, of least resistance, of least effort.

Let us find out the way how to achieve. It may take time. Achievement is not by any means possible all at once. **But I ask for the thin end of the wedge.** Will every Lodge, every Centre, every member, find the thin edge of the wedge, never mind how thin it is, place it in position and begin to hammer it home, however long the hammering may take? Every hammer-blow will bring us nearer to the Real, and deliver us from the shackles of the unreal
